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Unit 1202: The Language of Evocation.

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The purposes of this unit are to help the 12th-grade student understand that language can be used to evoke an experience, to enrich his perception of the evocative language of literature, and to demonstrate that evocation is not limited to either language or literature. The unit begins with a study of the evocative language in a radio announcer's description of President Kennedy's funeral cortege, of the role of ritual in suggesting the significance of an act, and of poetry in attempting to evoke experience. For an understanding of how evocation is related to motive, Kenneth Burke's dramatistic point of view is applied to motivation as seen in life and as re-created in literature. Next, the classification of writing (as descriptive-referential, pure-referential, and pragmatic-referential), the human tendency to create symbols, the use of figurative language, and T.S. Eliot's concept of the "objective correlative" are examined and related to selected works. Study questions for the use of evocative language in William Golding's "Lord of the Flies," discussion questions, and sample lectures are included. (See TE 001 328, TE 001 329, TE 001 332 for 10th- and 11th-grade units on discourse.) (JS)

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Unit 1202

The Language of Evocation

Grade Twelve

CAUTIONARY NOTE

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Materials Needed

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INTRODUCTION

The purposes of this unit are three: first, the unit attempts to bring students to an understanding of the way in which language can be used to evoke an experience; second, the unit attempts to provide the student with certain concepts and techniques which will enrich his understandings of the evocative language he encounters in reading literature; finally, the unit attempts to demonstrate that evocation is not limited to either language or literature.

A number of comments need to be made about the general procedures of the unit. The unit is designed for an inductive classroom technique. The problems with developing materials for inductive teaching are numerous and obvious. A few qualifying remarks are therefore in order. The lecture sections and transitional sections of the unit are artificial. The writers of the unit quite naturally render these passages in written style and thereby make them too formal for classroom reading. They are meant only as suggestions. The same general statement must be made about the discussion questions contained in the unit. The teacher should freely change these suggested remarks and questions to suit himself. Another set of problems in writing a unit such as this revolve around the selection and interpretation of the literature in the unit. The writers of this unit believe that other materials could be treated equally well using the approaches outlined here, and that the interpretations made in the unit are neither categorically right nor the only possible interpretations. It is hoped that they are illustrative. Here, again, the teacher should feel free to adapt the materials to suit himself. One point that should be noted is that by and large the unit as developed has avoided using the longer literary selections (plays and novels). Short stories and poems were preferred because they were easier to treat in the space available. Longer works could be successfully used in the unit.

Finally, the sample responses to the discussion questions in the unit share the artificiality of the lecture materials. Students will seldom respond in the ways indicated and the teacher will frequently need to use additional questions to bring students to the desired understanding. Students will seldom arrive at precisely the answer outlined, but it is hoped that they will be able to approach the desired response. In some cases, the teacher notes suggest that leading questions are likely to be necessary.

A few additional comments concerning the general format should be made. The left-hand column of each page contains notes for the teacher regarding procedures, organization, and assignments. Two types of these notes deserve special mention. Summaries of sections of the unit are marked and should be emphasized. The word ATTENTION is used throughout the unit to mark points where important generalizations are made. The teacher should also attempt to emphasize these points appropriately.

Note on the Use of Excerpts

There are several rather short excerpts which should be read either by the teacher or by a student who is experienced in platform reading. These excerpts have been included in the student reading materials, and students certainly might read along silently. Due to the importance of sound for some of the evocative effects, however, these should be heard by students as well as read. Excerpts #4 and #20 are intended for teacher reference only. If, however, you have very able students, these could also be distributed. The difficulty of their subject matter precludes their use in average or below average classes.

Introduction

Sample Lecture-Discussion

In the next few weeks we will consider the special use of language that we find in literature. We all recognize that the language of literature is basically the same as the language we use daily, and yet we also sense that it has some special qualities that differentiate it from our usual linguistic experiences. Our purpose in this unit is to explore the way that our language operates in the specialized form that we label literature. In order to accomplish this purpose we need to consider the effects that literature has on its audience. These effects are complex; they involve not only the meanings of words and patterns of meanings that the artist develops using words, but the sound qualities and visual qualities that words and the way words are arranged possess. When we consider these factors individually, as we will during the course of this unit, the complexity of literary communication seems overwhelming, as indeed it is. For that matter, any kind of communication is extremely complex when examined closely. For the moment let us ignore this complexity. I think we can best understand the special effects that literature has on its audience if we begin by looking at the way in which the language of literature operates in a total sense.

We can begin by studying an event and by seeing the ways that our language can be used to deal with that event. In doing this we should be aware that language is not the

only medium of communication that men use to deal with events. During the course of our discussion we will emphasize the use of language, but we will also note the way in which other media of communication operate.

Play Tape of "Kennedy
Funeral Procession"

Sample Discussion Questions

Students may have some difficulty in answering this question because of the strong emotional components associated with the event.

Here is a taped report of an event that almost all of you witnessed, at least in part.

1. What is the speaker attempting to do in this selection?

(He is attempting to report the series of events occurring before his eyes and to convey the people's reactions to it.)

2. What do you visualize as you listen to this "report"; what does the "reporter" succeed in making you see?

(The crowd, units of the armed forces service bands, the horses pulling the caisson, the flag-draped casket, the riderless horse, etc.)

3. What else is the reporter trying to get across?

(His own emotions and the emotions of the other people witnessing the procession.)

4. Does he think his description of the events that he is actually seeing gets the emotional punch across to his audience?

(No.)

5. Why is a description of what he sees insufficient? Why does he want to tell us about how far people in the crowd have traveled to be present at the funeral or about what they said in reacting to the President's death?

(Because this information suggests the fuller significance of the events which are being described; the speaker wants to suggest that the import of the event is very broad.)

Summary

What we have noted in discussing this tape is that the announcer is, on one level, using language to describe a series of events. We also noted that, on another level,

he is using language to express his feelings and to describe the feelings of others as he and they experienced the events of the funeral. These two uses of language can be extended to form the end points of a continuum that contains all the ways that language can be used. We will want to talk about this continuum in greater detail later in this unit. At present I simply wish to label the uses of language which represent the ends of the continuum. The type of language which is used to describe, as objectively as possible, events or objects is called descriptive referential or pure referential language

Students who have had PE unit 1002 may be able to supply the terms developed here themselves.

Write the underlined terms on the chalkboard.

This is essentially the language of science. The language used to recreate for both the producer and the consumer the subjective experience resulting from contact with events or objects is called aesthetic referential or evocative referential language. This is essentially the language of literature, the language which attempts to render the full significance of events. The kind of language we have been listening to, the report of the President's funeral procession, lies somewhere between these extremes. It is called pragmatic referential language and tends to combine the descriptive and evocative functions. It is the common language, the language we use daily, the language of persuasion and of most of what we call exposition.

Keeping these terms in mind, let's continue our analysis of this report.

Sample Discussion Questions

Leading questions may be necessary to help students in reaching these conclusions.

6. How do you think the announcer's audience was responding to this report?
(In a very emotional manner.)
7. Do you think the announcer was aware that his audience was responding in this way?
(Yes.)
8. Does he make any attempt to insure this response? Does he introduce certain words, phrases, or modulations in his voice that suggest his own emotion, or which seem to be attempts to color rather than simply report the event he is witnessing?
(Yes, for example, the halting delivery, the break in his voice when he first describes the cortege, his description of the moving crowd as a "sea," etc.)
9. Why?
(Because the speaker himself feels strong emotions and, almost of necessity, reveals this emotion; in addition he recognizes that his audience wants him to evoke emotions for them.)
10. Are there any other sounds which you can hear on this tape which contribute to the emotional effect of this description?
(Yes. Drum beats, hoof beats, martial music, muted commands to the marchers, etc.)
11. Why do these sounds add emotional impact to the description?
(Because the sounds are associated with certain traditional rituals of our culture.)
12. Do any of the things which the speaker describes, in and of themselves, cause the audience to respond emotionally?
(Yes. The casket, the coffin, the riderless horse, the boots, the flag-draped coffin, the various units of the armed forces, the setting for the procession.)
13. Why do these objects cause emotional responses?

(Because of their relationships to the history of our country, to death, to our rituals, to our own family, to our way of life--our culture.)

A great variety of student responses should be encouraged here. The teacher may wish to ask leading questions to try to point out some of the specific emotional responses being communicated. Some of these are: respect for the dead; respect for the President and Presidency; sorrow over the loss of a leader; sympathy for the family of the deceased; concern for the future of the country; shock at the manner of death, etc.

14. How would you summarize what is being communicated by this description?

15. Do you think that all listeners had the same experience, received the same communication, felt the same emotions in listening to this description?

(No.)

16. How would you account for the differences in the way the audience responded to this broadcast?

Leading questions may be necessary here.

(Differences in the previous experiences, the current status, the emotional contributions, etc, of those listening caused them to respond differently. For example, children were probably not as moved as most adults; women probably felt greater sympathy for the President's wife than men; the lunatic might even have laughed at what most people considered tragic.)

Summary

This account of the events of President Kennedy's funeral procession, then, brings us a great deal more than a description of the series of events. The audience hearing this broadcast was not simply receiving information about what followed what in the funeral procession; it was experiencing some emotions connected with this particular situation. These emotional components of the situation were being evoked by the use of language, by the responses of the listeners to the sounds of the procession itself, and by their responses to the objects and

A review of word referent relationships might help to make this point clearer.

events being described. Language, in other words, was not the only media evoking the emotions experienced by listeners. Finally, the particular emotions evoked in the individual listeners varied because of the listener's background and emotional state.

Sample Lecture-Discussion

To this point we have been discussing what we would have to call the ordinary use of language. While the particular example we have used does evoke in us many emotional experiences, while it is obviously being used in very unusual circumstances, and while it does perform a very complex task, we would agree, I think, that it is not what we usually refer to as literature. It is important for us to note that what we have referred to earlier in our discussion as pragmatic referential language is extraordinarily flexible, that it can in fact perform some of the same tasks that aesthetic referential language performs. It is this characteristic of our "daily language" which makes it possible for us to carry on the complex communication necessary to our day to day living. This flexibility creates problems, however. In a sense, the very fact that we can use the same language to mourn the death of our pet dog or the leader of our nation makes us feel that a special use of language is necessary, a use which at least makes precise the differences in meaning that seem inherent in the differences between the death of dogs and presidents. This is not to say that our usual use of language is not capable of making such distinctions, but rather that the distinctions made aren't precise enough to satisfy

Sample Lecture-Discussion
Continued

all people. Perhaps another way to say the same think is to say that some people feel that our ordinary use of language is incapable of expressing the full significance of an event such as this, or, in a wider sense, of any event in the life of a human being. This brings us to literature which might be considered as an attempt to use language to make distinctions more precise, to make apparent the full significance of events or to evoke an experience of the event itself. We will probably want to sharpen this rather hazy definition of literature before we finish our discussion, but for the moment this will do. The point that we want to reach is how the evocative use of language manages to convey a kind of total picture of the events surrounding the President's funeral. I think each of us will agree that the total picture (or the full significance) involves more than what the reporter describes with his words. We should think of the circumstances under which or in which the language of the reporter takes place. That is, we should consider the context of the report.

Of course, this gets us involved in thinking about factors in addition to the words used: the music, the riderless horse, and so on. These factors we call non-linguistic, or better than that, extra-linguistic features. The linguistic and extra-linguistic features establish a kind of total picture. And within that total picture we'll be able to see how the rather ordinary words of

the reporter take on a special significance and accomplish much more than communicating simply what the reporter sees. For most of us, the language of the reporter in this context communicates something of the emotions and ideas which were flowing at that particular time.

Let's try and remember some of these extra-linguistic features of this context. In doing this let's agree to deal with the total action of the President's burial. We need not, in other words, confine ourselves to what we heard described on the tape. We can consider the other things we saw and heard at this time.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. Can you think of any actions or things which you saw or heard about during the course of President Kennedy's burial or which we have previously mentioned, which did not necessarily depend on language to convey their meaning; which, in fact, suggested meanings which were hard to put into words?

(The riderless horse carrying its burden of empty riding boots, the flight of airplanes with one plane missing, the silent drill of the Irish cadets, the eternal flame, John Jr.'s salute, the funeral mass, the slow pace of the line of march, the 21-gun salute, the playing of "Hail the Chief," "The Navy Hymn," the "taps," religious services conducted by all denominations, the march of the heads of governments other than ours, etc.)

Let's spend some time discussing these non-linguistic or extra-linguistic symbols or symbolic actions which were a part of the context of these events, the symbols or symbolic actions which were used to suggest full significance, the significance that pragmatic reference doesn't seem to be able to convey. This discussion will be helpful both in the way that it suggests the limitations

Sample Lecture Discussion Continued
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of our ordinary use of language, and in the way it suggests, through a consideration of the context, the potential significance of these events. What we will be doing is attempting to explore the emotional and ideational limits of this experience. We will be considering the kinds of emotions experienced and the kinds of ideas which seem emotionally relevant to the context of this event.

Perhaps we ought to consider the fact that most of these actions were not arbitrary, that they were conventional responses which are no less important or meaningful because they are conventionalized. Many of the things you saw were quite similar or even exactly the same as actions which are used to bury people who have none of the power or glory that a President possesses. Death, in other words, in itself is something which forces us beyond our language, something which leads us to use these conventional actions to express the fuller significance of the event. When we face this basic situation in the case of a President, a President who has been assassinated, the complexity of these actions increases because the complexity of the event has increased. The President is not simply a man, in a sense he is a nation, and consequently his burial must be in some sense national, or even international.

The name which we usually apply to the actions we have been discussing is ritual. A ritual is a conventionalized set of actions which is used to respond to certain

Sample Lecture-Discussion
Continued

events, events which tend to occur in the life of all of the members of a society. Rituals are not limited to events such as birth, marriage and death, however. In a sense the actions we engage in when, after awakening, we get ourselves "ready to face the world," washing our faces and hands, combing our hair, brushing our teeth, are ritualistic. Rituals, then, are very much a part of our life, of our responses to the world in which we find ourselves. Let me add that language is itself capable of being used in this fashion. The speeches made in the Rotunda at the foot of the casket of the dead President, and the way we say good morning or good night to people who we see at certain times of the day illustrate the use of language in a ritualistic fashion.

If we wish to push our consideration of the way ritual can serve to suggest the fuller significance of events, we might consider the way in which ritual serves to tie man to his distant past. Read this selection taken from Sir James Frazer's study of the rituals associated with the succession to the kingship among primitive peoples. Frazer establishes that these peoples believed first that their leader was a kind of god, and second that all gods and especially man-gods are subject to weakness in old age and eventually death. He then gives us these general accounts of the rituals of such people.

Before we consider the question of what this might have to do with the death of John F. Kennedy, and I think

Teacher Note: Distribute copies of the following passages of Sir James Frazer's The Golden Bough: (1) p. 309 from "Now primitive peoples" to "beginning to fail," (2) p. 319, from "In the cases" to "in the interval," (3) p. 323, from "A custom of the same sort" to "this hour had come," and (4) p. 325, from "There are some grounds for believing" to "prominent place "

you probably have some ideas about this already, let me ask you some questions which may help to enrich our understanding at this point.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. If President Kennedy had lived and if he wanted to continue as our President, what would he have been required to do during this past year, in fact what had he begun to do during the trip to Dallas?

(Campaign for the office of President.)

2. Why?

(Because our law requires a President to run for office every four years.)

3. Why?

(The framers of our constitution felt that periodically the people of our nation should have an opportunity to remove their leader from office.)

4. Let us suppose that Mr. Kennedy had lived and won re-election, what could have happened in 1968?

(He would have been forced to give up the office of President, since by law he could only serve for two four-year terms.)

5. In our elections what is usually one of the major lines of argument advanced by the party which has been out of power?

(It is time for a change in leadership. The party in power should be removed.)

Now let me supply two additional pieces of information about the rituals described by Sir James Frazer. First, in these rituals the king is regarded as a sacrificial victim, he is killed to ensure the continuing good fortune of his people. Second, frequently the method used to kill the king involves slitting the throat and decapitation.

Sample Discussion Questions

6. Have you heard people refer to President Kennedy as a sacrificial victim, or a martyr?

(Yes.)

Another why question at this point will push students to an immediate tie up with the passages from The Golden Bough. If the suggestion implied in the answer seems lost on the students asking this second why question might be advisable.

8. What is the meaning of the "eternal flame" that burns by the dead president's grave?

(It is meant to symbolize the inspiration that John Kennedy's life and death gives to his people.)

9. Where was President Kennedy shot?

(In the head and throat.)

10. What do all of these questions and the answers you have been giving suggest?

(That in some ways there are similarities between the primitive rituals and our own rituals; that the events of President Kennedy's death seem, in a hazy way, almost a throwback to ancient ritual.)

Summary

Let us immediately qualify all that we have suggested by our discussion. In a sense we have simply been playing with the notions Frazer gives us. While our laws with regard to the terms of Presidents and the way that the out party behaves during elections (saying that the party in power must be thrown out is not so different from saying that "the king must die") seem in some sense connected with our distant past, and while the notion that President Kennedy was a sacrificial victim whose life and death provided our country with inspiration, whose life and death was an "eternal flame," invites some comparison to the sacrificial role of the king in the rituals Frazer discusses, there are obvious limitations in how far such comparisons can be pushed. The king (President) after all does not literally die as a result of being defeated in an election; one man, not an entire nation killed President Kennedy (though some statements have been made which suggest that we all share some of the responsibility

Summary Continued

for his death); if the President was a sacrificial victim he seems to have been sacrificed at the whim of a single individual. Perhaps the extent of the limitations of our game is best demonstrated by noting that we've made a point of the President's being shot in the head and throat; it was virtually impossible for Oswald to shoot him any place else. In other words, the correspondence between ritual practices and the manner of the President's death is at best accidental, incidental or circumstantial.

The real point of our discussion of ritual, then, is the fact that ritual can serve to suggest the full significance of the act. When the Catholic mass is used as a part of the ritual surrounding the President's death we are reminded that it is itself a ritual commemoration of the death of a sacrificial victim, whose crucifix bore an inscription which said he was king of the Jews, and who himself claimed spiritual kingship. This reminder serves to suggest the full significance, the meaning beyond our ordinary use of words, inherent in the death of a President.

Introduction

Distribute "Out of The West of Lucky Riders" by Myron Levoy in Glikes, E. A. and Schwaber, P. <u>Of Poetry and Power</u> (New York: Basic Books, 1964.) Allow 5 to 10 minutes for reading.

Having noted the way in which ritual can be used in an attempt to communicate the full significance of an action, let us turn to the special use of language which attempts a similar revelation of significance, which attempts to evoke an experience. For the moment let's confine ourselves to the same series of events that we have been

discussing. We will examine a poem about the death of President Kennedy. In examining it we can look for attempt to suggest the kinds of connections with man's past, the kinds of fuller meaning that the rituals we've been discussing suggest.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. What references does the poet make to rituals associated with death?

(The "tolling" bell, the "dropping" flags, the carrying of the body, the building of the "mound of stones.")

2. What kind of flags are dropping?

(Autumn's flags.)

3. What flags of Autumn always drop?

(The leaves on trees.)

4. What flags were dropping in this particular autumn?

(As a tribute to the President all U. S. Flags were flown at half mast.)

5. Why does the poet bother to tie these ideas together in a single line? Why does he introduce this ambiguity?

(To show us the way in which the particular events of the autumn of Kennedy's death are tied to the cycle of seasons.)

6. Is there any way in which the cycle of the seasons parallels the cycle of a man's life?

(Yes. The spring of the year is the season of birth, the summer the season of maturity, the fall the summer of old age and winter the season of death.)

7. Does the poet point toward this comparison of the cycles of year and a man's life in any other phrase in his poem?

(Yes. In the line which follows the dropping of autumn flags we find that the flags are falling toward a "luckless winter.")

The teacher may wish to discuss with students the way in which this parallel is used in literature and in our everyday uses of language.

Keeping these notions in mind let's turn our attention to another of the ritual act of the poem.

8. Why does the poet suggest making a mound of stones and leaving the mound to the sun?

(The covering of a body with a mound of stones is an ancient way of burial. In leaving the mound to the sun we see again a reference perhaps to the cycle of seasons which depends on the position of the sun.)

9. What does the poet accomplish in tying these notions together?

(Since sun worship is common among primitive peoples, and this worship is usually tied to the cycle of seasons, and since frequently ritual treatments of death are tied to acts of worship, the poet is able to broaden and reinforce an idea already introduced into his poem.)

Let me now add some more information to what you already know about the sacrificial deaths of kings. Frequently the kings are killed on a seasonal basis, typically at the beginning of the season of death, winter. Moreover, building monuments to dead kings is a practice you already know about. There are many great mounds of stone in Egypt, aren't there? I'm sure you know that a monument is to be built at President's Kennedy's grave.

I think that by now you're beginning to see how poets can use language to evoke responses to an event, and we haven't looked closely at most of our poem yet. We've spent most of our time talking about the closing sections of this poem, and we haven't as yet even mentioned a major theme of the poem.

Sample Lecture-Discussion Continued
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Sample Discussion Questions

10. What is the poet talking about, generally speaking, in the first two stanzas of his poem?

(The way in which the President's death is unlike the usual fate that befalls the heroes of western movies--1st stanza--but like the kinds of deaths that did occur in the west--2nd stanza.)

11. How does the poet keep this notion in our minds as we move into the last two stanzas of the poem?

(He discusses the President's burial as though it were taking place in a small Western town. "Word spread through town." The people hearing and gathering silently, one bell tolling, townsmen, stranger, carry it past the town, the ravine, the mesa.)

12. Does anyone know whether any of the western Indians buried their chiefs under a pile of stones?

(Yes. Some tribes did.)

13. Why does the poet emphasize the "western" element in his poem?

(Because out of the west came the President's death, because the western movie is typical of American culture, because the west has been the "land of opportunity" for Americans, and the land of sudden and violent death, because the sun sets in the west and brings darkness and night, the time of death, because the west is the land of our legends, and because in some senses President Kennedy was the western hero, the man on the white horse, the hope of the western alliance, the "luckless" rider among the lucky riders whose horse will surprise us no more with the sound of its hooves, because President Kennedy brought us to the New Frontier.)

Leading questions may be necessary here.

I think we have begun to see more of the significance that evocative language can suggest as it deals with an event, and I don't think we've exhausted our poem yet. Let me throw these notions out for your consideration.

Sample Lecture-Discussion continued

First of all we haven't talked very much about the way this poem gives us a literal sense of what happened. The President was riding when he died; he was shot in the head but from the back (the way most heroes in westerns get it is from the back); men and women and children called out and became silent knots, the bells tolled,

the flags dropped. The sound of hooves, his riderless horse, his countrymen and dignitaries from other countries (strangers in town) helping to carry him to his grave, these were all features of his funeral.

And we haven't drained the poem. We have yet to mention those underlined intrusions between the main stanzas of the poem. Here the poet uses another poet's lines to comment on his own poetry. The poem which these lines come from is Walt Whitman's poem "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd." Whitman wrote his poem to commemorate the death and burial of Abraham Lincoln. The obvious points of comparison between Lincoln's assassination and Kennedy's are immediately suggested by Levoy's use of these lines in his poem. Moreover, we are reminded of the opening of Whitman's poem:

"When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd
And the great star early drooped in the Western sky
in the night
I mourn'd, and yet shall mourn with ever returning
spring."

The themes of Levoy's poem are indeed similar to what is suggested by the lines of Whitman. The death of Lincoln, a President, a western star, killed at Easter (another popular time for killing the sacrificial king is at the end of the season for death and dying,) has become enmeshed with the cycle of the seasons and of life and death. Let's look at the passages of Whitman's poem which Levoy borrows in their original context.

If the teacher has time a detailed comparison between these poems might be profitable.

Distibute copies of Walt Whitman's "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd." in, for example, The Oxford Book of American Verse. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950).

Levoy, while he is willing to borrow the words of another poet, writing about a similar event, re-orders these phrases, to suggest the way that their meaning relates to the meaning of his poem. He seems to suggest that the "soft feet" of his poem, that cover death as Whitman's soft feet did, with roses and early lilies (lilies are the flower of Easter and funerals) don't ring as true for the poet, as do the hooves of the riderless horse, or the poetic horse (Pegasus) of Whitman. Levoy's poetic horse "Pegasus" is suspended, falling; his poetry has a hollow sound, as a muffled drum. The best he can do is "float a song" on a winged horse (Pegasus) over the tree tops, but that, after all, was all that Whitman could do.

This brings us to the last line of the poem. The poet has told us something, perhaps all that words can say, about the death and burial of a "legendary" figure, and now in a line that stands by itself because it is the beginning of a legend, he ends his poem. In a word the poet uses the formal device of setting this line off to suggest that it is a beginning as well as an ending in much the same way that President Kennedy's death represents the end of life and the beginning of a legend. Or to put it another way, the poem itself, as Whitman's poem "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" marks the end of life and the beginning of a legend.

Summary

ATTENTION

In leaving "Out of the West of Lucky Riders" I think we ought to note a few things. First that the language

Summary Continued

of literature, evocative language, does seem to possess some special qualities, that it does work at giving us full significance, at evoking emotional responses and ideas which are emotionally relevant to the event. Second, I think that we should remember that what we have been doing in trying to paraphrase our poem, in trying to delve into its meanings is in itself a rather backward way of approaching the problem. What we have been reading out of, or into, this poem is not the poem itself; and it is in the poem itself that the language of evocation and the full significance lies. Finally, I think we might note that the language of literature shares some characteristics with the language of legend and myth. We ended our discussion of "Out of the West of Lucky Riders" talking about legends. In a sense this is to be expected since legend and mythology, as well as literature, are preserved in the language and since the language of myths and legends is related to the language of literature. Myths and legends are the ways that civilizations try to evoke experiences, to suggest significance; literature is the way an individual tries to evoke experiences, to suggest significance. If we note that the civilization's full significance is the summary of the full significance that individuals find in events, the relationship becomes clearer. Add to this the fact that the rituals of the civilization provides a sanctuary where these special uses of language can be preserved,

Summary Continued

(Whitman's poem "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" was read by one radio announcer during his broadcast of President Kennedy's funeral procession. Moreover, the military and religious rituals connected with the burial contain literatures, legends, and mythologies) and we see the way a civilization accumulates, preserves, suggests, and evokes its full significance. "Out of the West of Lucky Riders" and all the other poems, books, plays, movies, written or to be written, all the stories told or to be told, about President Kennedy's life and death are the beginnings and ends of a legend, and of the significance of President Kennedy's life and death.

Sample Introduction

As we begin attempting to get more specific about the evocative use of language I think we ought to consider the fact that language is primarily a human activity, and that like all human activities it is a means to an end, that is, we use language to satisfy our needs. Language is an activity that involves motives. I think spending some time talking about human motives at this point might prove quite helpful as we continue our discussion of the evocative use of language. Let's begin by asking some questions about a human activity in an attempt to discover some things about the nature of motives.

NOTE: Students who have previously studied Unit 1102: The Language of Persuasion, should already be familiar with motivation and some of the terminology.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. Why do men work?

(To earn money.)

2. Why do men want to earn money?

(To buy the things that they need to live.)

It is worth noting that students will probably come up with either more general or more noble reasons in response to this question. Usually, however, this more cynical explanation will emerge with leading questions.

3. What are the things that men need; what are the things that men spend money on?

(Food, clothing, shelter, families, books, movies, T.V., telephones, cars, airplanes, missiles, space ships, education, etc.)

I think we could go on naming the various things man seems to need or the things he spends money on for some time, couldn't we? I don't think we need to, however. Our purposes will be well served if we consider a couple of fairly obvious notions that we came up with by thinking about these things that man needs.

Sample Discussion Questions

4. First, is what men need, needed in the same way in every case; are these needs equally crucial in terms of preserving life?

(No. Some needs seem more fundamental than others. Food for example seems more fundamental than a car.)

5. Second, do all of the things man spends his money on seem to involve simple needs, needs which are reducible to a single need?

(No. Needs tend to become complex. A car for example might be needed to transport one to and from his job, or to and from his grocery store and thus it might be said that the motive for buying a car is to satisfy the need for food. On the other hand many people buy large expensive cars to transport them; here the motive seems related to a need to indicate prestige or to gain esteem.)

Summary

In summary, motives then derive from needs that range from the very fundamentals kinds of physiological necessities to the kind of necessity one feels to demonstrate to others his success, position, or depth of feeling. Motives are also mixed; they interact in such a way that a given act might be the result of the simultaneous working out of several different levels of motives. Perhaps we ought to consider a simple action that you might perform.

Summary Continued

If we can see the characteristics of motives that we've been talking about in a simple situation the points we've made will be clearer.

Let's suppose that one of you were in this classroom, and that the windows of the classroom were open and you got up and closed the windows.

Sample Discussion Question

6. What motives might you have for doing this?

(We might feel cold and want to regulate the temperature of the room or we might be bothered by noise outside of the room.)

At least on the surface, then, we might interpret your closing the windows as an attempt to make yourself comfortable. Obviously being cold is an uncomfortable physical state, and the attempt to make the room and yourself warmer is an attempt to satisfy a rather fundamental need. In the same way excessive noise or trying to hear something when there are interfering sounds can make us uncomfortable. However, it seems equally possible that your motive in closing the windows might be mixed. Let me just suggest some of the possible complications of motives that might be involved. Even a quick glance at what we said about closing the windows because of the noise outside should suggest the possibility that we might attribute your closing the window to a motive involving wanting to hear and understand what is being said in the classroom. This is not a completely physiological motive. If we consider the possibility that being cold makes it difficult for you to concentrate, your closing the window because you felt cold seems to lend itself to explanation in a similar way. Suppose someone else had suggested that you should close the window, or that you had asked others if you

should close it. Motive might become even more complex in such cases.

The point of this discussion is, as I mentioned initially, that a motive or complex motives are a part of all human actions and that the motives which cause the evocative use of language concern us. An obvious question suggest itself.

1. What motives cause the use of evocative language?

The teachers should expect no definite or definitive answer here. Students will probably refer back to the immediately preceding discussion and answer that evocative language serves to bring us the full significance of events. The teacher in this case asks then why knowing about the full significance is important. The teacher should expect and work for a situation where many alternative answers to the question are suggested, but where no one answer seems more relevant than any other. If students should suggest that the use of evocative language makes possible a sharing of experience a slightly different procedure should be used. The teacher should ask how this is accomplished and why it is important. If students can answer these questions well, a re-ordering of the subsequent section of the unit, which demonstrates how the notion of motives helps to understand the nature of the shared experiences and the importance of sharing experience, will be necessary.

Summary and Transition

It seems to me that thus far the answers we've gotten to the question I proposed are partial and not very satisfactory. I think we might profit if we approached the question from another angle. I think it would be profitable if we tried to consider the components of the various situations in which we find motive operating. In doing this I think we'll provide ourselves with some means of asking and making a more complete answer to our original question, we'll provide ourselves with some forms for talking about motive.

The machinery that we will develop grows out of the work of Kenneth Burke. He suggests that we try to analyze

Write underlined word on chalkboard.

the question of motives from a dramatisic point of view. Later we'll try to specify what he means by this more completely. For now let me say that he suggests that we use techniques similar to those we use in analyzing dramas or plays to analyze all human actions. Let's consider the actions we've been engaging in in this classroom, let's try and isolate the elements of these actions and apply some labels to them. I think you'll begin to see what Burke means. A short time ago I asked you a question about the motives causing evocation.

Sample Discussion Questions

2. What did you do when I asked that question?

(Tried to answer it.)

3. Did all of you try to give answers to the question?

(No. Some students didn't speak.)

4. Did some of you try to answer at first and then did you give up?

(Yes.)

5. Why?

(We became angry when you were unwilling to accept any of the answers.)

Students will not respond initially with this answer; leading questions will be necessary.

Now whichever of these things you did we can classify

them under the single term act. Burke uses this term to signify what is done. We could as well call what is done your action or your response. The term is not terribly important, but it is important for you to note that the act can involve not doing as well as doing.

Let's consider another element of what was involved when I asked my question.

Write the underlined term on chalkboard.

Sample Discussion Questions

6. Where did these acts take place?

(In a classroom, in a school.)

7. Would you have given the same answers to the question if you were standing on a street corner and someone asked you such a question?

(No.)

8. What answers might you have given?

(No answer, or raising questions about why the question was asked.)

9. Suppose I had walked into the classroom a month ago and, without any other comment, asked the same question, would your answers have been the same?

(No.)

10. Why?

(Because the reasons for asking the question and the relationship of the question to our work here wouldn't have been clear.)

ATTENTION

Write the underlined word on the chalkboard.

The point is that the time and the place when and where the question is asked and the answer is given effect the action you take in responding to it. This aspect of actions Burke refers to with the term scene. If you think for a moment about what you might say about the value of your high school education when talking to one of your friends over lunch, and when addressing an assembly of parents, teachers, and other students during a graduation exercise I think you'll see why scene has an important effect on motives. Other terms that could be used to refer to the scene are situation, environment, setting, or context. The next obvious question is:

Sample Discussion Questions

The teacher should remind students that both answering and not answering were acts.

11. Who acted in response to my question?

(The various members of the class.)

12. Suppose I had asked you this same question when you were eighth graders, and suppose that I had gone through an analysis similar to the one that preceded my asking you the question now, would you have answered then as you do now?

(No.)

13. Why?

(We are not the same people now that we were then.)

Write the underlined word on the chalkboard.

Burke uses the term agent to name the actor, the person who performs the act. I think you can easily see that the variety of answers and non-answers to the question I asked is a result of the various personalities and experiences of the agents who acted in the same scene. Alternative terms for agent are actor, hero, villain, protagonist, or antagonist. In a sense the agent is the center of focus in many if not all considerations of motive. This is not to say that motives should be explained only in terms of the actor, it is to say that frequently we ignore whatever else may affect the agent, whatever else may contribute to motive, and we attribute the act to the agent, make him responsible for it. One of the reasons for using the terms of Burke's dramatism is to help us become more aware of our tendencies to think in these ways and to suggest alternative possibilities.

Sample Discussion Questions

14. What means did you use to answer my question?

(Speaking or not speaking.)

15. Suppose I had asked you a question that could have been answered by yes or no. Would you have found it necessary to speak to answer the question?

(No. We could have nodded or shook our heads.)

16. Suppose I has asked you the question as part of a test, how would you have answered it?

(By writing an answer.)

17. Suppose you simply wanted to let me know that you didn't have any idea about the answer, would you have been limited to speaking or not speaking?

(No. We might have shrugged our shoulders.)

You could, then, have used other ways of acting, there are possible alternatives for accomplishing the act in question. The name Burke applies to the means or agent used to accomplish an act is agency. Agency really labels how the agent accomplished his act. Alternative labels are means and method. The very fact that we can answer or not answer a question is the most obvious example of alternatives of agency.

Write underlined word on the chalkboard.

Sample Discussion Questions

Discussion questions 18, 19, and 20 may be difficult questions for students to answer because of the insight required. Leading questions may be necessary and a variety of answers should be encouraged.

18. Finally, why did some of you try to give answers to my question?

(We were embarrassed by the silence that first met your question, we wanted to demonstrate that we knew the answer, we wanted to impress others with our answers, etc.)

19. Why did some of you avoid answering questions?

(We were afraid of making mistakes, the question seemed unimportant or irrelevant, we didn't care about what was going on and didn't want to get involved, we wanted to talk with our friends instead, etc.)

20. Why did some of you stop trying to give answers after a while?

(We grew tired of trying, we wanted to show you we were angry when you didn't accept what we thought were good answers, we wanted to show you we couldn't see what you were driving at, etc.)

Write the underlined word on the chalkboard.

The reasons you're giving, the why of an action Burke calls purpose. You can see from our discussion that purposes vary greatly. The same act occurs for many different reasons. Something else that may be less obvious to you, more difficult to see is that there is a difference between purpose and motive. The simplest way to make the distinction, I think, is to say that purposes

ATTENTION

tend to be pretty much tied to the particular scene in which an act takes place in many different scenes.

Purposes are particular in that they grow out of the situation; motives are general in that they operate in many situations.

Summary

Write the underlined phrases on the chalkboard.

Burke says "Any complete statement about motive will offer some kind of answers to these five questions: What was done (act), when or where it was done (scene), who did it (agent), how he did it (agency), and why (purpose).

You might have noticed, if you have any experience with journalism, that these are the same questions that the lead paragraph in a news article tries to answer. My point in mentioning this is simply to indicate that people other than Mr. Burke feel that the answers to these questions are important ways of summarizing events, and because, a little later I will make an assignment based on this fact. Let me, before I make such an assignment, try to suggest a few more things. First, our reason for trying to come to some understanding of Mr. Burke's terms, of his dramatic view, was that I felt the terms would help us to deal with motives that lead to the evocative use of language. Second, the use of these terms is itself a means or an agency, there are alternative ways for treating such considerations. My reasons for choosing this agency are a function of the act that we are engaged in, the study of evocative language, because students can understand them fairly easily, because I like them, and because they seem to increase understanding.

ATTENTION

1. What was done (act)?
2. When or where was it done (scene)?
3. Who did it (agent)?
4. How did he do it (agency)?
5. Why did he do it (purpose)?

Assignment

Distribute Worksheet #1

Now let us see if some of what I have said is true; let's see if the terms do work and you do understand them. Tonight I would like you to look through a newspaper and find a lead paragraph that does answer the five questions we have on the board. Using our discussion as a basis, try to explain, analyze, or construct the motives that might have been operating in the act described. List the answers to the five questions we arrived at in the appropriate place on the assignment sheet, and write your explanation at the bottom.

Let me give you one additional piece of help. Mr. Burke in discussing these terms points out that it is frequently helpful in understanding the motivation of an action to consider the interrelationship between these terms. In other words, try to consider the way in which the scene suited the act, or the act suited the agent, or the purpose grew out of the agent or the scene. Mr. Burke calls these the ratios, the scene-act ratio, the act-agent ratio, the agent-purpose ratio, or the purpose-scene ratio. Ten such ratios are possible: scene-act, scene-agent, scene-agency, scene-purpose, act-purpose, act-agent, act-agency, agent-purpose, agent-agency, agency-purpose. Thinking about these possible interrelationships may help you to get a better grasp of the mixed motives operating in most human actions.

The lesson following this discussion should be devoted to a careful analysis of samples of the work students do in this assignment. Particular emphasis should be placed on the way in which considering the effect of the scene on an act, (scene-act ratio) and effect of the scene on the agent. A theoretical discussion of these ratios is found on pages 3-9 of Kenneth Burke's A Grammar of Motives and a Rhetoric of Motives, Meridan Books M143, 1962.

Sample Introduction

The teacher may wish to replay the tape of the Kennedy funeral.

Now that we've discussed and clarified the use of our terms a bit by talking about the examples you brought to class let's return to an action we've already talked about in some detail. Let's consider again the broadcast we discussed early in this unit. In particular I would like to consider the segment of the tape in which the reporter discusses the reactions of individuals, of people in the crowd, to John Kennedy's death. Before we consider the reporters act in telling us about these reactions, let's apply our five terms to the total event of the Kennedy burial. This should help us to understand the backdrop against which the particular act we're going to discuss is operating, in a sense it will spell out the scene in which our action takes place.

Sample Discussion Questions

Write a brief summary of the answers to each of these questions on the chalkboard. Leading questions may be used to make student responses as specific as possible in answering all of these questions.

1. What was the act that was being performed?

(The burial of an assassinated President.)

2. What was the scene of the Kennedy burial?

(Washington, D. C., the nation's capitol; buildings were draped in black; flags flew at half mast; people lined the sidewalk; bands, units of the various armed forces, high-ranking foreign officials, and high-ranking representatives of various religious groups, members of the President's family marched in a funeral procession; martial music, muffled drums and horses' hooves could be heard; people were weeping; the riderless horse, the cortege, the cassion pulled by horses, the flag-draped coffin could be seen, etc.)

3. Who was the agent?

(By virtue of the various representatives present, the agent was the nation, or perhaps, the world.)

4. What was the agency?

(The various rituals and rites used in burying the President.)

5. What was the purpose of this act?

(To honor an assassinated President.)

Now let's look at the particular action we've discussed before. Let's consider the five aspects of that particular action. And as we proceed let us consider some of the interrelationships between act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose that we've discussed previously.

Sample Discussion Questions

6. What is the particular act that I said we were concerned with?

(A reporter's telling us of the reactions of people who have come to the funeral, of people who are in the crowd witnessing the events.)

7. Are the statements he reports profound in any sense?

(No. They tend to be very plain or simple.)

8. Are they moving?

(Yes.)

Let's hold off the obvious question for a moment.

Let's wait to ask why these comments are moving.

9. What are the scenic elements that we can actually hear in the tape?

(The muffled drums, distant music until the end of the section when it sounds closer.)

10. What do the sounds suggest?

(The total scene we described before.)

Now let's ask the question we put off a moment ago.

11. Why do the simple comments we heard move us so deeply?

Leading questions may be necessary here.

(It seems that the scene is so coloring the act in this instance that even the plainest of comments is endowed with profundity; the simplicity of the statements, on the other hand, seems to suggest a sense of personal loss, thereby adding personal dimension to the sense of national loss suggested by the scene.)

In other words, in this instance the scene-act ratio is such that the scene endows the plain and simple statements with profundity and the statements add a personal dimension to the scene. Now let's consider the agent.

12. Why is this man present at this point along the route of march?

(It is part of his job.)

13. Does this seem to you an important motive in explaining his reasons for including the statements of the various spectators in his description?

(No.)

14. Why does he include these statements in his report?

(Because he feels that the statements are necessary, that they describe the way the event taking place "feels" for him and for others.)

What I'm trying to suggest here is that we're seeing the scene-agent ratio in operation. The reporter is not concerned so much here with giving his listeners "color" to use the newsmen's own word. He is being motivated by the scene; part of the scene for him are the comments of people that he has talked with, he feels the same senses of national loss and personal loss, and quite naturally his act reflects this.

If we consider the agency used here we can see similar interplay. The reporter's rate of speech, his cadence, the way he pauses parallels the beating of the muffled

drum. The sense of tension conveyed by his slow and deliberate delivery suggests the personal feelings he shares with others. In other words, scene seems to be conditioning controlling agency here and the agency contributes to the sense of scene we develop in hearing the tape.

Finally let's consider purpose.

Sample Discussion Questions

15. What is the announcers' apparent purpose here?

(To suggest the way "the crowd" feels about the death of the President.)

16. Do you think that this totally explains his purpose?

(No. Communicating his own feelings seems equally important.)

17. Why is this so?

The teacher might wish to explore the way the "reporter" or "announcer" becomes an "evoker" or "racounteur" in this case.

(Because the scene operates to qualify the purpose. The scene, because it moves the "announcer" or "reporter," makes his purpose different than it would be if he were reporting the return of a healthy young President from Dallas.)

Summary

In short, the scene in which the action we've been discussing is so emotionally loaded that all of the other aspects of motivation that might normally operate tend to succumb to it and in giving up their normal force they add to the total effect of the scene. The reporter's motive is almost totally a response to the scene of the burial of a young, attractive President, and man with pains in his back who kept it up, a good Joe, who dies a bloody and sudden death at the hands of an assassin. He no longer "reports" or announces, he tries to tell us what he feels.

Introduction

I think that now we can return to a question that we asked earlier. I think we can return to the question of motive in the use of evocative language. The way to approach the motives that cause the use of evocative language is to analyze its use in the same way that we analyzed the use of pragmatic-referential language by the reporter. We try to discover as much about the act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose of a particular use of evocative language as we can, and knowing this we then can try to understand the motives of the person using evocative language in the same way we tried to understand the motives of the reporter.

I think we ought to consider the limitations and the special strengths of this approach. First, let's notice that in many cases we may not be able to specify much about the scene in which the use of evocative language is the act. The reason that we know so much about the scene in which the reporter acted is that we saw and heard much of what he saw and heard, perhaps, even from a vantage point quite similar to his. In analyzing some examples of evocative language we will know far less about the scene. The poets, playwrights, or novelists whose acts we will study, for example, may have lived in countries we've never seen, in a time very different from our own. We may have very little biographical data to help us establish scene. Moreover, the scene which causes the artist to act may never have existed in his imagination.

Our remarks could apply as well to any of the other terms we've been using to analyze motives. We may know

even less about the agent in many cases than we know about our reporter. All the poems and stories whose authors are unknown are an obvious example of this problem. Questions like "Who was Shakespeare?" and "Who was Homer?" and "Did Socrates really exist?" questions that have been asked by great scholars, demonstrate the existence of this problem. If we consider the way that the meanings of words change we can see the obvious problems we face in dealing with agency. If we consider the way that purpose tends to be tied to the particular circumstances of the act itself, the problems here become apparent.

You'll notice that I avoided mentioning act in my discussion thus far. I didn't mean to imply that there are not problems in dealing with the act. All of the problems we've discussed thus far are problems which are bound to make it difficult for us to understand the act. However, there is a difference. The act, the evocative language, continues to exist, when the scene changes, when the agency changes, when purpose changes. It is worth noting that this wasn't always the case. The act changed when literature was oral, that is, stories or poems were remembered and told rather than written or printed. In these cases the agent intentionally and unintentionally changed the act in performing it. This possibility is always possible in the drama, of course. If we consider the response of the listener or reader to evocative language as an act, then change is possible.

Summary

The point is, in studying evocative uses of language, the act itself often provides the clues about agent, scene, agency, and purpose that enables us to analyze motives. This doesn't mean that we ignore relevant biographical information, or information about the particular history of the poem, or statements of purpose that might be available. Rather it means that often such information will be difficult to obtain and unspecific, and that we will have to infer what we can from the suggestions contained in the act itself. Let's consider another example of evocative language, and apply our terms. Perhaps what I've been saying will become clearer.

Distribute copies of Alastair Reid's "That Dying" from Of Poetry and Power. Allow 5 minutes for reading; then read aloud.

Sample Discussion Questions

Leading questions will be necessary to elicit the desired responses to all of these questions.

1. What form does the act, this use of evocative language, take; what is this act?
(The writing of a poem.)
2. What can we infer about the scene on the basis of this poem?
(That someone or something has died in a bloody way.)
3. What can we infer about the agent from the poem?
(That he is a man of words who finds himself having some trouble with words.)
4. What is the agency he uses in this act?
(Words--language.)
5. What is his purpose in writing this poem?
(To find words for his wordlessness.)

Summary and Transition

At first glance, our terms don't seem to have told us much about our poet's motives, do they? What we know is that a man of words is using words to tell us he is wordless in dealing with some death. That seems simply enough doesn't it? Let's push our analysis a little

further however.

6. What kind of death robs the man of words?

(The end of an "incredible life.")

7. What kind of death ends an incredible life?

(An "incredible death")

So we have a death that can't be believed. We still haven't come very far, have we? All we have is a death so hard to believe that it robs the poets of his words. But does it really? Aren't we looking at the poet's words?

Let's try using our terms in a new way. Let's use them inside the poem.

Sample Discussion Questions

8. Who are the agents in the poem, who acts in the poem?

(Words.)

9. How do the words act?

(They act like people, or more specifically, like poets. On sunny days they flex their muscles, strut, discover what to say as they say it, make the music of meaning by playing but when the glass, the mirror of language breaks, when women hide their faces, when raw emotion shrills its alarm, people, poets, and words bear stretchers, are tight lipped, tense, run to the scene where nothing can be said, the bloody scene, they clutch at air, water, anything handy. They offer no nonsense or no adjectives because they can't stop the flow of blood, or of life, they can only serve to mark the passing of life, as dirge, bell, a stutter, a sigh, and silence do. Finally words, people, and poets walk away aimlessly and silent, mourning a loss.)

Summary

If we think about this use of words as agents we can see that the poet has accomplished a rather neat trick. He has played his game well. The scenes in which the words act are scenes created by the words, the acts the words perform are acts created by the words, and the purpose of the words is to do what words cannot do, act. In other words, by playing with the agen-agency ratio, by making

the agency the agent, the poet finds words for his wordlessness.

If we now consider the poet's motive we can see that his play on words has met his need to express his ideas and feelings, to recreate his experience of wordlessness in the face of an "incredible" life and death, has enabled him to express his grief and to be a poet, to suggest the full significance of his loss of words.

Assignment

If we now add to what we've seen in the poem the information that this poem like "Out of the West of Lucky Riders" was occasioned by John Kennedy's death, we should once again be able to work through our analysis of act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose and complicate our picture of the poet's motives still further. In fact I should like you to attempt this. I want you to re-define each of the key terms in light of this knowledge and to attempt another analysis of what the poet's motives are.

After students have completed this assignment at home or in class the teacher should discuss the new analysis of motives that result. Particular emphasis should be given to the way in which the poet is able to make the particulars of Kennedy's death take on a more generalized significance by tying it to man's general muteness in the face of death and the problem that man always faces in the attempt to put his experience into words.

Sample Summary Lecture Discussion

I think that now, at last, we're ready to tie up the question I involved us in some time ago. The question we asked was "What are motives that cause the evocative use of language?" Let's ask our five questions again, remembering that our answers are going to be very general.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. What is the act?

(The evocative use of language.)

2. What is the scene?

(Man's experience of his world.)

3. Who is the agent?

(Man.)

4. What is the agency?

(Language.)

5. What is the purpose of the act?

(To recreate for another human being or for himself the emotions and ideas that resulted from an experience of using language. To recreate insofar as possible the act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose of an experience.)

The teacher should here note that other agencies can be used. Music and art might be mentioned as examples.

Summary

I think now we can make a statement about the motives of evocation that will make sense to you. We said earlier that the purpose of an action differs from the motive for an action in that the purpose is tied directly to the particular actions and that motive could cause a large number of different actions. If this is the case, and the purpose of evocation is to recreate an experience, we could say that motive for evocation is the need to share experience in both its emotional and ideational dimensions. In doing this we need to remember that we said motives can be mixed, can be complex, and that when we talk about the need for sharing experience we are talking about the most complex kind of interactions of scene, act, agent, agency, and purpose imaginable; that we are talking about the fact the novelist writes novels to get money to buy bread, to warn us about where we are headed, and to play a beautiful game with words. All of these things involve a sharing of experience.

ATTENTION

I think an obvious question suggests itself at this moment. In fact, it is a question that suggests itself often but is seldom asked. It is the "So what?" question. I think we ought to ask it, although the question should be phrased a little more precisely. Let me ask you this.

Sample Discussion Question

As phrased, this answer seems simple. To arrive at it through discussion, however, may be quite difficult and fairly time consuming.

6. We've spent a lot of time arriving at a statement that evocative language enables us to share experience. What's so important about sharing experience?

(Sharing experience enables us to acquire insight into what makes others act the way they do. It therefore helps us to understand others and shows us the limitations of our own value systems and value judgements. It makes us more humane human beings.)

Finally, let's make two more points. Language is not the only means of sharing experience. We've already mentioned some other agencies. While our main concern is with evocative language we should remember that other agencies can be used. Another point that we need make clear is that the phrase "sharing experience" can be applied to uses of language other than the evocative use of language. What we mean when we speak of sharing experience in connection with evocation is the recreation of the total experience, emotions and ideas.

Assignment

Distribute copies of Stephen Crane's "A Mystery of Heroism" in Van Doren, C. Twenty Stories by Stephen Crane (New York: Knopf, 1940).

What I'd like you to do now is to try to make a particular application of what we've been discussing. I'd like you to read "A Mystery of Heroism" by Stephen Crane, and by using the five terms of dramatism, to try to analyze the motives that led Crane to write his story.

You will probably have to attempt a dramatistic analysis of the motives of the characters in Crane's story, in order to accomplish this. You'll need to be sensitive to the subtle way that the scene-act and scene-agent ratios operate in the story. You'll probably have some difficulty determining what the agency of the total act in the story is. Finally, you should remember that when it is convenient or useful to do so, you can isolate the separate acts within the total act, analyze them in the terms of dramatism, and discover the blocks of scenes, acts, agents, agencies, and purposes that are used to build a total act, scene, agent, agency, or purpose. I think you should be able to accomplish this in about 3 or 4 pages.

Sample Lecture-Discussion Introduction

For students who have had MPEC units in 10th, 11th, or 12th grade which cover the same or similar materials, this discussion should be considerably shortened.

I think that having established a general purpose for the evocative use of language we can consider in greater detail the way that the evocative uses of language relate to other uses of language. You'll remember that early in our discussion we introduced some terminology to name the various uses of language. We mentioned three basic types of language: descriptive or pure referential language, pragmatic referential language and aesthetic or evocative referential language. I think we ought to consider again what we said about these uses of language.

We said that the type of language that is used in describing, as objectively as possible, events and objects could be called descriptive-referential or pure-referential language. We said that the type of language used in combining descriptive with emotional overtones could be

called pragmatic referential language. We also noted that these categories were on a continuum with each other, that these uses of language weren't mutually exclusive.

Procedure: Use Transparency #1 on overhead projector. (See Appendix.)

Sample Lecture-Discussion
Continued

Let's look at a diagram which represents these varying uses of language.

This diagram is useful because it suggests both the way in which these uses of language are distinguished from one another and the way in which they blend together. The words written below the line are meant to help you to notice this characteristic of our categories. The most important thing for you to note is that pragmatic-referential language is the real work horse of our three uses of language. It shares the power to designate, to point to objects and events that is the special province of pure-referential language, and it shares the power to evoke, to recreate experience that is the special province of evocative reference. Of course, it is equally possible to say that pure reference and evocative reference share some of the range of pragmatic reference. Scientists frequently try to persuade each other that one theory or another is correct and poets are not above using poetry to evaluate their society. The point is the lines of division between these various uses of language are not lines at all but are hazy regions of blending which we use as boundaries because it helps us to put the various examples of language that we encounter into pigeonholes. So long as we remember that the pigeonholes aren't really

Sample Lecture-Discussion
Continued

Distribute: "Four Versions
of a Story" from Brooks, Purser,
and Warren. An Approach to
Literature. New York:
Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1939.

pigeonholes we're free to use the pigeonholes to classify language in this way.

I think we'll want to elaborate our diagram a bit more before we're satisfied with it, but let's try using it to classify some examples of language first. I think we'll have better grounds for amplifying our diagram if we use this approach.

What you have before you are four different accounts of the same event. I'd like you to read them all. After you've finished we'll discuss each of these pieces separately and try to classify it roughly in terms of our diagram. In doing this we'll ask and answer the same general set of questions for each of our examples. The questions have also been distributed to you so that you can think about them as you read these materials. You may wish to make notes about each of the selections, under each question.

The teacher may follow a number of alternative courses in using these study questions. Students might be asked to write out answers to each of the questions. They could be broken up into groups to discuss the various selections, (the problem with this procedure is that the first selections at least provide little basis for discussion.) If this procedure is used, question 7 can be used as the initial question for subsequent class discussions. Whichever procedure is used, a class discussion should be the final step. The teacher should begin the discussion by considering each of the selections, and by using the questions the students have worked with. The students will probably have little trouble classifying sections 1, 2, and 4. Hopefully, they will feel some problem in classifying selection 3 as aesthetic reference. This problem should be partially solved by asking the students to find places for the selections on the continuum between pure and evocative reference. The words written below the line of reference should also help here. Once this is accomplished, the teacher should try to highlight differences in purpose, word choice, emphasis and arrangement which the students noted. (The teacher may wish to talk about the principles of selection in this regard.) Finally, the teacher should encourage students to generalize about the differences between the

4.

"Porphyria's Lover"

Robert Browning

The rain set early in to-night,
The sullen wind was soon awake,
It tore the elm-tops down for spite,
And did its worst to vex the lake:
I listened with heart fit to break!
When glided in Porphyria; straight
She shut the cold out and the storm,
And kneeled and made the cheerless grate
Blaze up, and all the cottage warm;
Which done, she rose, and from her form
Withdrew the dripping coak and shawl,
And laid her soiled gloves by, untied
Her hat and let the damp hair fall,
And, last, she sat down by my side
And called me. When no voice replied,
She put my arm about her waist,
And made her smooth white shoulder bare,
And all her yellow hair displaced,
And, stooping, made my cheek lie there,
And spread, o'er all, her yellow hair,
Murmuring how she loved me--she
Too weak, for all her heart's endeavor,
To set its struggling passion free
From pride, and vainer ties dissever,
And give herself to me forever.
But passion sometimes would prevail,
Nor could to-night's gay feast restrain
A sudden thought of one so pale
For love of her, and all in vain:
So, she was come through wind and rain.
Be sure I looked up at her eyes
Happy and proud; at last I knew
Porphyria worshipped me; surprise
Made my heart swell, and still it grew
While I debated what to do.
That moment she was mine, mine, fair,
Perfectly pure and good: I found
A thing to do, and all her hair
In one long yellow string I wound
Three times her little throat around,
And strangled her. No pain felt she;
I am quite sure she felt no pain.

As a shut bud that hold a bee,
I warily opened her lids: again
Laughed the blued eys without a stain.
And I untightened next the tress
About her neck; her cheek once more
Blushed bright beneath my burning kiss:
I propped her head up as before,
Only, this time my shoulder bore
Her head, which droops upon it still:
The smiling rosy little head,
So glad it has its utmost will,
That all it scorned at once is fled,
And I, its love, am gained instead!
Porphyria's love: she guessed not how
Her darling one wish would be heard.
And thus we sit together now,
And all night long we have not stirred,
And yet God has not said a word!

1. What seems to have been the writer's purpose in writing this account?
2. Do the words he chooses seem to reflect his purpose?
3. Do the particular facts or events this writer emphasizes seem to be a result of this purpose?
4. Does the way the writer arranges his words reflect his purpose?
5. Would you classify this selection as pure reference, pragmatic reference, or evocative reference?
6. Where would you locate this selection on the continuum between pure reference and evocative reference?
7. Which selection or selections seem to you to be the most difficult to classify? Why?

various uses of language on the basis of what they have encountered in the selection.

Summary

ATTENTION

On the basis of our discussion, I think we can see that the differences between the various uses of language are sufficiently great to enable us to classify them, and that the uses of language are hard to classify, that our categories are not sharply separated. Thus, while we had little difficulty placing selections 1 and 4 toward the end points of our continuum, and while it was fairly easy to classify selection 2 as pragmatic-referential language, it was difficult to define any exact location for selection 2 on our continuum, and selection 3, while obviously attempting to evoke a response in the audience, does not seem to be an attempt to recreate for the author the experience in question. In other words, while we can classify selection 3 as being in the area of evocation, it obviously is closer to pragmatic reference and inciting than is selection 4.

ATTENTION

Let's try and summarize some of the distinctions which have enabled us to make the classifications we have. The use of language we encountered in selection 1 is characterized by its use of fairly technical vocabulary, its attempt to strip the action described of its personal element. The writer's purpose could be said to be objective description or designation. The language of selection 2 is less technical than that of selection 1 and attempts to give us some sense of personalities with motives that cause the action that is described. The

writer's purpose here is closer to evaluation, to an analysis of the event. The language is not inflammatory; the words used, though they do have some emotional coloring, are not "loaded" terms. The writer is basically concerned with denotations as opposed to connotations of words. Selection 3 differs radically from selections 1 and 2. The words chosen, the detailed description, the arrangement of the elements of the selection (beginning with a description of the beautiful corpse, for example) reveal that writer's purpose is to get an emotional response; his writing here is directed toward evoking a response in his readers. We notice that he is more concerned with the connotative meanings of words than were the writers of selections 1 and 2. He attempts to give the reader a more complex and complete sense of the personal motives of the actor in the incident in question. Finally, we should note that he relies heavily on some very conventionalized, stereotyped language to accomplish his purpose, his language is "sentimental." Selection 4 uses language in still another way. Perhaps one obvious difference will help make the distinction clear. In this selection the writer assumes the role of the murderer. In using this device he is trying to give us a rendering of motive which is complete and personal; in a sense he is reading his own motives into the act of another man. Notice that he has selected and arranged (even to the point of formal arrangement that we call poetry) the details of the act.

The distinction between the denotations and connotations of words should be reviewed for students at this point.

The teacher might wish to point to specific examples of the use of detail.

He omits the apprehension of the "criminal"; he omits the details of the parental search; he turns the whole incident into a study of love gone mad, love realizing his goal of possession completely. Notice, also, that he adds details to the description of scene, act, agency, agent, and purpose which cause the motive structure to become clearer, more complete. His language, while it demonstrates the sound concern with connotations as does the language of selection 3, is neither sentimental nor trite. The writer, in attempting to realize the experience of the murder, in attempting to share his experience, has recreated the experience for himself and for his audience. His purpose then is to share experience.

Sample Lecture-Discussion

Write the underlined words on the chalkboard.

Use Overlay #1a on transparency #1. (see Appendix A)

Let's return now to our diagram. I think we can profitably complicate it on the basis of what we've been discussing. Let me give you some alternative terms for classifying the various uses of language. The terms are: exposition, which is the use of language to describe and evaluate events; persuasion, which is the use of language to influence events and people; and evocation, which is the use of language to recreate the events as experiences. If we superimpose these terms on our continuum, we get a more complex and more accurate representation of the various interrelationships between our uses of language.

The things to note about our elaborated diagram are: first, that our categories still are not mutually exclusive and second, that we have increased the range of the various

uses of language, that is, our new diagram indicates more clearly the way that descriptive reference can be used persuasively and evocatively, and the way that evocative language can be used persuasively and descriptively. The real virtue of our amended diagram, then, is that the regions of overlap that we have previously classed under the heading of pragmatic reference are more clearly delineated. If we think back to our four examples and classify them using this diagram I think you'll find we can locate them more precisely.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. Where would you place selection 1?

(In the area of exposition excluded from the area of persuasion.)

2. Where would you place selection 2?

(In the area of exposition included in the area of persuasion.)

3. Where would you place selection 3?

(In the area of evocation included in the area of persuasion.)

4. Where would you place selection 4?

(In the area of evocation excluded from the area of persuasion.)

Since our particular interest in this unit is the language of literature I think we ought to carry our analysis and our diagram one step further. The terms I wish to introduce are pseudo-literature and literature. Pseudo-literature we will define as the use of language to recreate an experience for the audience. Literature we will define as the use of language to recreate for the artist and the audience an experience. We can add these to our diagrams in this way.

Write the underlined terms on the chalkboard.

The teacher might wish to suggest that similar terms and analysis could be developed for persuasion and exposition.

ATTENTION

Let's consider the kind of complexity we've added to our discussion of the uses of language by introducing this distinction. I think that again we've increased the range of our terms and at the same time enabled a more precise placement of the various examples of language we examined. We've indicated, for example, that literature can be persuasive as well as evocative and that evocative-persuasive language can be something other than literature. Perhaps the best way to demonstrate the ability of our new terms and classifications is to use them.

Sample Discussion Questions

5. Where would you place selection 3 on our new diagram?
(In the area of pseudo-literature.)
6. Where would you place selection 4?
(In the area of literature.)

Summary

Before we take leave of our diagram, I would like to remind you of a few things. First, while our diagram does provide us with pigeonholes, language is harder to pigeonhole. Let me give you a few examples of what I mean. If you think back to our tape of the Kennedy funeral you'll see some of the problems that any classification of the uses of language will encounter. Parts of our tape that we might push into our descriptive reference pigeonhole pop out, almost immediately, because they have an evocative dimension. Similarly, other sections that we might under normal circumstances class as sentimental, or as pseudo-literature, pop out because the announcer was obviously recreating his own experience. The scene can greatly affect the act of using language.

The teacher might point specifically to the "description" of the riderless horse and the reporting of the reactions of people who were attending the funeral.

Let me take another example. You'll remember we talked about the ritualistic use of language, the use of language in greetings, for example. If you think for a moment about this you'll realize that we're dealing with a use of language that can't be placed in any of our pigeonholes. This use of language can also be discovered in much of our "small talk," talk about the weather, about our families and "how they are." This use of language is sometimes called phatic communion. We'll be talking about it in more detail later this year. I only mention it now to suggest in another way the limitations of our system for classifying the uses of language. While we may find our diagram a useful way to summarize some of the differences and similarities between our various uses of language, we need to recognize that our classification is arbitrary, is a result of our search for a way of classifying uses of language, and that the distinctions we make using it are not absolute in any sense.

Write the underlined terms on the chalkboard.

Assignment: (Two class periods should be set aside for this work.)

Now I would like you to try using our system. In doing this you should remember that you are not going to be able to decide exactly where a particular example of language belongs. You will probably do better if you try to classify the four examples I'm giving you in relation to one another. That is, you will, in some cases, want to distinguish more than whether or not a given piece is literature. What I'd like you to do is to read each of the selections I've given you. When you've read them you should decide how you would classify (try to be as specific

Distribute
the following selections:

(1) John F. Kennedy's "Ich Bin Ein Berliner" in Nevins, A., ed. The Burden and the Glory (N. Y.: Harper & Row, 1964.)

(2) "I Couldn't Get Rid of the Creep Who Loved Me" from True Romance Magazine, (N. Y.: McFadden-Bartell Corp., August, 1964.)

(3) William Faulkner's "Barn Burning," in Warren, R.P. and Erskine, A. Short Story Masterpieces (N.Y.: Dell, 1964.)

(4) Randall Jarrell's "The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner" in Matthiessen, F. O. The Oxford Book of American Verse (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1959.)

about this as is possible) each of them. Then I'd like you to write an explanation of your classifications.

This explanation should be similar to the explanations we arrived at for the different versions of "Porphyria's Lover." You may even find asking yourself the questions we asked about those selections of some help. The important part of this assignment is not the way you classify these selections, but your reasons for doing so. In cases where you know anything about the scene-act ratio, where you know something about the scene in which the language was used, you may wish to take account of this knowledge in classifying the examples in question.

TEACHER NOTE: Most students will find part of this assignment very, very easy; they will have no difficulty classifying the "creep" as pseudo-literature, and "Death of the Ball Turret Gunner" and "Barn Burning" as literature. They will have some difficulty, however, deciding which of the latter examples is more persuasive, more of an attempt at persuasion. In a sense there is no single right answer on this point. "Ich bin Ein Berliner," if they remember the scene in which the act occurred, may present some difficulty. After the students have finished the assignment, a discussion of the various selections and the classifications should be conducted. Student's explanation should serve as a starting point for discussion and the discussion should be directed toward summarizing and reviewing the uses of language. The teacher should be careful to avoid making overly categorical classifications of the various selections. The students should be given an ample opportunity to explain their views. Hopefully the teacher will be able to serve as a mediator resolving conflicting student classifications.

Sample Introduction

Now that we've examined the relationships between evocative language and other uses of language we can examine the way in which the language of literature accomplishes its goal; we can examine the resources of the language of literature.

I think the easiest way for me to begin our discussion is to ask you to take a free association test. What I'd

like you to do is to take out a sheet of paper. I'm going to say three words and I want you to write the first word that you think of on your sheet of paper. I'm sure you've all heard about this test before. Psychologists have used it for diagnosis and research. Remember the first word you think of is what I want you to write. Here are the words.

Read these words one at a time allowing 30 seconds for each response.

dog, justice, man

Now let me ask you some questions about your responses.

1. How many of you responded to the word dog by writing cat?

(A sizeable majority of students should respond affirmatively to this question.)

2. How many of you responded to the man by writing woman?

(Again a majority should respond affirmatively.)

I think I'll have to change my questioning techniques slightly now.

3. How did you respond to the word justice?

(A series of answers should be listed on the board.)

Now let's examine what we've found out about the way words work by playing this word game.

4. Why do suppose so many of you responded in the same way to the words "dog" and "man"?

(These words, however complex the objects they refer to may be, are simple words in that the objects they refer to can be pointed at with ease. These words, therefore, lend themselves to stereotyped responses and we tend to respond with words that are most frequently paired with our original words.)

5. Why do you suppose that we get such a variety of responses to the word justice?

Sample Discussion Questions

Leading questions will be necessary here.

(Not only does this word refer to a complex thing, but the thing to which it refers is not something we can point at as easily as we can point at men or dogs. The word does not lend itself to stereotyping, and although the words that you responded with are words that frequently are paired with our original word, they too tend to refer to things that can't be pointed at with ease.)

The point is, your responses to these words were somewhat predictable. I don't mean to say that these words have exactly the same meaning for all of you, nor do I mean that many of you think man means woman. What I do mean is that you responded to these words as I guessed you would. Psychologists call this kind of response a conditioned response. What they mean is that an animal trained in a certain way will respond to a given signal with appropriate behavior, much as dogs or children come when their names are called. This apparently simple way of explaining behavior can be used to explain some very complex kinds of behavior. A number of psychologists have had a good deal of success in using it to explain the way we learn language. For our purposes, the theoretical explanations of this view can be greatly abbreviated. All that we need to say is that as the child learns a language he also learns many responses which can be anticipated by a user of words.

ATTENTION

Sample Discussion Questions

6. What significance does this have for the user of language who is interested in evoking a response?

(By choosing words carefully the writer or speaker can use the conditioned responses which the words elicit to contribute to the evoking of the overall response he desires.)

I think you might get a better idea of what I mean if we look at an example which uses this device. The following

Distribute copies of the first paragraph of Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher," from Campbell, Killis, ed., Poe's Short Stories (New York: Harcourt-Brace, 1927.)

Sample Discussion Questions

Read phrases such as
 "a sense of insufferable gloom,"
 "vacant eye-like windows"
 "ghastly tree-stems."

Summary

Sample Transition

Sample Discussion Questions

is the first paragraph of Edgar Allen Poe's short story, "The Fall of the House of Usher."

7. How would you label the mood, the feeling which the author attempts to evoke with this passage?

(A feeling of fear and depression in the face of a rather unspecified kind of evil.)

Now let me call your attention to the words and phrases Poe uses.

I think you can see the way that a good writer can use our conditioned responses to words to aid him in accomplishing his purpose. Let me add that once we've encountered a word or words in literary contexts we may have a specific conditioned reaction to it or them. Someone who's read Sinclair Lewis' Babbitt will respond in a particular way when he encounters the word in another piece of literature. The writer can use such responses to evoke the response he desires.

Let's consider another aspect of our response to language which the writer can use to accomplish his purposes. We mentioned earlier that language was not the only media which could be used evocatively. We said that music, among others, was capable of evoking responses.

8. In the most fundamental sense what is music composed of; what are musical notes?

(Sounds.)

9. If we remember that the primary form of language is the spoken language, what is language composed of?

(Sounds.)

10. What is the obvious conclusions that we can draw?

(That the writer can use the sounds of his words to help in evoking the response he wants.)

I'm sure that you've heard people say that poetry should be read aloud. Frequently, if you ask people why they say this, they will answer that the sound of the poem contributes to the total effect. This is the point that we've been making.

I would like to give you an example, but I'm not going to take the easy way out. I could read a passage from Poe's "The Raven" and bore you again with the statements about the way the "sound of the words contributes to the sense" of the poem. Poets aren't the only people who use language evocatively, nor, are they the only users of evocative language who rely on the sound of words to evoke appropriate responses.

Read Excerpt #3 aloud.

Listen to these two versions of the same event and decide which sounds most appropriate to the event being evoked.

Sample Discussion Questions

11. Which do you feel uses the sound of words most effectively, and why?

(The second, because the sounds suggest the way the birds sounded and moved as the narrator saw them.)

Read Excerpt #4 aloud.

Let's consider another example of the use of the sound of words to evoke a response.

12. What response is this writer trying to evoke?

(Laughter.)

13. What is the main device he uses in accomplishing this purpose?

(Using rhyming sound patterns in close conjunction.)

The sound of words is not the only sensual dimension of language that the writer can use. If we consider the written language it is apparent that we can discuss shape. As music uses sound, painting, sculpture, and architecture use shape. Literature can use shape as well. It is worth noting that, since writing is a derived form of language, shape in the sense that we've been discussing it is a derived quality and therefore somewhat less usable in evoking a given response. I think the most obvious ways that shape is used in evocative language can be noted in the stanza forms of poetry. If we wanted to prove our case conclusively, we could look at a large number of various stanza forms, trying to see in what sense these spatial arrangements contribute to the evocative power of various poems. However, I think we can be satisfied with something less than conclusive proof. Let's consider two examples.

Sample Discussion Question

The teacher may wish to have students look at this poem again.

14. First, when we discussed "Out of the West of Lucky Riders" we noted that the placement of the last line of the poem, its separation from the other stanzas of the poem. Why did we feel this was important?

(Because it suggested the way the end of the poem, and of the president's life, marked the beginning of a legend.)

The shape of the poem at this point, then, contributes to the evocative force of the poem. Let's consider another more intricate example. The piece that I'm passing out is a religious poem, by a seventeenth century poet. As you read it, consider its shape and the way in which the shape of the poem contributes to its sense. Let me suggest

(See p. 60.)

Pass out Excerpt #5.

1.

He saw a flight of birds approaching. At first he could only count eleven, but two more came down into the group as it drew near. They had been flying higher than the rest. The birds circled above him. ~~They~~ moved from left to right. They seemed to be flying around a tower of air.

2.

** He watched their flight; bird after bird: a dark flash, a swerve, a flutter of wings. He tried to count them before all their darting quivering bodies passed: Six, then, eleven: and wondered were they odd or even in number. Twelve, thirteen: for two came wheeling down from the upper sky. They were flying high and low but ever round and round in straight and curving lines and ever flying from left to right, circling about a temple of air.

**From: Joyce, James. A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. New York: Viking, 1944.

"Hinky - Pinky"

You have all heard of the evil clergymen; the sinister minister. Few people, however, know the reasons behind his reputation. It was his own flock that gave him this label, for he was a great aggravation to his congregation. For instance, his personal honesty was questionable, and several of his parishoners suspected that they had a culprit in the pulpit. Because of this suspicion, he became very tense, and was always nervous in the service. He would invariably stumble and falter at the alter, and sometimes his hand shook so violently that he could scarcely handle a candle. There were several other things that annoyed his people. They resented the pretentiousness of his unlisted telephone number because they could never find the rectory in the directory. He preached at such length that they could not help squirming through the sermon. His christenings were conducted in an old basin, for want of a font. This, of course, resulted in a dismal baptismal. He was so money-conscious that he suggested to his colleague, the Catholic pastor (who was a beast of a priest), that he require penitent heretics to contribute money in reparation for their separation. The bishop at the three-sided basilica (mistakenly known as the trihedral cathedral) vetoed this plan, however, on the grounds that it would be, in effect, a professional confessional. The minister even got into trouble with a local of the Brotherhood of Eucharistic Assistants. The dispute came about because he refused to employ members of the local to distribute the holy bread at a reconvening of old parishoners. This, the Brotherhood claimed, was a non-union reunion Communion.

From: Schampel, Grant. Unpublished Paper. University High School, University of Minnesota.

"Easter Wings"¹

George Herbert

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,²
Though foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying more and more
Till he became
Most poor:
With Thee
O let me rise
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day Thy Victories:
Then shall the fall further the flight in me.

My tender age in sorrow did begin:
And still with sicknesses and shame
Though didst so punish sin
That I became
Most thin.
With Thee
Let me combine,
And feel this day Thy Victory;
For, if I imp³ my wing on Thine;
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

1. In the early editions of *The Temple*, the lines of *Easter Wings* were printed vertically, the first stanza on the left-hand page facing the second on the right-hand page. 2. Abundance. 3. A term from falconry: to mend the damaged wing of a hawk by grafting to it feathers from another bird.

From: Coffin and Witherspoon, ed., Seventeenth Century Prose and Poetry. New York: Harcourt-Brace, 1946.

to you that 17th century writers were not as solemn about their religion or their poetry as we are, and that at least in one point this poet has a good deal of fun with this poem.

TEACHER NOTE: The teacher, depending on the time he has available, may handle the discussion of this poem either as a lecture or by eliciting the commentary from students. In either case the main points he will wish to develop revolve around the wing shaped verses, (the teacher could tell students to turn the sheet on which the poems are printed so the lines run vertically as the footnote suggests), and the way the stanzas follow a falling and rising pattern. The first half of each stanza deals with man's fall from grace, the second with his rising from that fall. This can be tied to the death and resurrection motif of the Easter season. Finally, the teacher can note the ironic touch contained in the lines "Most poor: and Most thin." It is at these points that the poem itself is poor in terms of the number of words and thin, in terms of shape.

Summary

The point that we've been trying to make is that the writer can use the physical characteristics of language, its sound and shape, to aid him in evoking appropriate responses. I think you should remember that while shape is a characteristic that is really apparent only in the written language, sound can operate in either the written or the spoken language. The written language, is after all, a representation of the sounds of language and a careful reader can hear what he reads.

The teacher might wish to discuss the use of dialect, eye-dialect and sight-rhymes as further illustrations of the use of sound and shape in evocative language.

Sample Transition

Let's consider another way that we respond to language

Sample Discussion Questions

15. If I say to you "A rolling stone gathers....," what do you expect me to say next?

(no moss.)

16. Why do you have this expectancy?

(Because we have heard this expression many times.)

17. What would happen if I finished my statement with the word "momentum"?

(We would be surprised because what we expected didn't happen.)

Write the underlined word on the chalkboard.

What we see in this simple example is the way in which language can create in us predispositions, expectancies, or, to use a psychological term, set. A set, according to psychologists, is a tendency to continue to respond to events in a certain way. The example we've looked at is a very simple one, it is really like the conditioned response we discussed earlier. In a way, sets are complexes of conditioned responses. If you think back to one of the examples we used when we talked about these responses to words, Poe's opening paragraph from "The Fall of the House of Usher," you'll remember we said that our responses to the words Poe uses help to build a response in us. If instead of considering our responses to the individual words you consider our response to the entire passage, you'll see what I'm driving at.

Re-read Poe selection.

Sample Discussion Question

18. After reading this passage, what do we expect, what is our "set" as we continue with the story?

(We are expecting gloomy, ominous and fearful deeds.)

Another name for this device is foreshadowing. I'm sure you've heard it mentioned before. It is one of the ways that language can "weave a spell" around us, can hypnotize us, can direct our attention, can build suspense.

I think we ought to consider the other possibility that we discovered in our original simple-minded example. We saw that if we said "momentum" instead of "no moss" a kind of surprise results. Writers can use this kind of surprise. Let's consider the following section of an e. e. cummings' poem, "Poem, or Beauty Hurts Mr. Vinal."

The poem can be found in Matthiessen, F. O., ed. The Oxford Book of American Verse. New York: Oxford University Press, 1950.

Sample Discussion Questions

19. How had the poet surprised us here?

(By using the rhythm and some of the phrasing of a national song to make a statement about some of the superficialities of our culture.)

20. How does this relate to the general response he is attempting to evoke?

(The shock or surprise that we feel is similar to shock he feels and tries to express about the superficiality of a culture that can equate "Abraham Lincoln and Lydia E. Pinkham.")

The teacher may wish to spend some time discussing the specific references of the poem since they may not be apparent to students.

Summary

Language can be used to create expectancies which can

ATTENTION

either be fulfilled or thwarted by the user of language.

This potential can be exploited to aid the writer or speaker in evoking the response he wants.

Simple Transition

Another characteristic of our response to words that

If students have had MPEC Unit 1001R this discussion could be handled in terms of the word-referent relationship. Teachers might find 1001R a useful reference.

the writer or speaker can use is a result of our tendency to equate words and the things they refer to. This means that the writer or speaker can use words to elicit from us the responses that the things the words refer to might elicit. An example will illustrate what I mean.

Distribute Whitman's "Song of Myself" from the Oxford Book of American Verse.

Sample Discussion Questions

21. Why does Whitman list all of the various geographical locations, geographical features, people, and occupations in the section of his poem?

(By identifying himself with all of these places, people, and professions he gives us a sense of his own feeling of the complexity of his humanness, of his ties to other men, of his feeling of nationality and internationality of his "diversity.")

Leading questions will be necessary here, and a statement about what Whitman was doing in "Song of Myself" would be helpful.

22. How does this listing accomplish his purpose.

(By evoking in us our responses to the various things to which his words refer, the response appropriate to the diversity he feels in communicated to us, the experience is shared.)

We could elaborate this point considerably, and from a variety of sources. But let's be satisfied with examining one additional example, this time in prose. Let me direct your attention to a selection from something you recently read. In Faulkner's story "Barn Burning" you encountered the following passage. I want to call your attention to the way Faulkner evokes the scene in which the acts are taking place.

23. How does Faulkner evoke for us the feeling which led the young boy to think the thoughts in the underlined passages?

Read the paragraph in "Barn Burning" which begins, "Presently he could see the grove of oak and cedars."

The teacher will need to ask leading questions about specific associations which the objects Faulkner mentions cause in the students.

(By referring to the things, the trees, shrubs, gates, etc., which the boy sees as he passes on his way to the house, although the only thing Faulkner tells us about the house is that it is big and has pillars, we are led to visualize it on the basis of our response to things around it, to the context of things in which the house is located.)

Summary

In both of these cases, we respond in a way similar to the response we discussed initially, the conditioned responses to words, but instead of responding to words themselves we respond to things to which the words refer. I suppose if we looked again at the passage from Poe's story, we discover that part of our response in that case was attributable to the referents of the words rather than the words themselves. Another interesting possibility that the idea of response to a referent suggests, is another explanation of why the tape of the Kennedy funeral moved us deeply. The words themselves may not have been as effective as the thing to which they were referring, the scene.

Sample Transition

I think we can move on to another response to language that writers and speakers use effectively. Let me return again to the passage from Faulkner's "Barn Burning" that we just discussed.

Sample Discussion Questions

24. What does Faulkner accomplish by not telling us, specifically, what the house looked like?

(He makes us imagine what it looked like.)

25. Why does he want to do this?

(Because it leads us to cooperate with him in the telling of the story, leads us to take part in the story, to share his experience as story teller, and to share the experience of the young boy through whose consciousness we get the story.)

Write the underlined term on chalkboard

This use of language is called suggestion and what the speaker of writer is doing is using our tendency to fill in the blank, to supply what is missing, on the basis of our own experience. This makes us share with him in the experience of recreating experience. At the simplest level we see writers using our responses in this fashion when they abbreviate or give us only the initial letter or letter of certain tabooed words and phrases. I suppose the asterisks, stars, curlicues and exclamation points that appear in comic strips are another example that we've encountered. At a higher level, suggestion operates as it does in the Faulkner story, or in the short poem by Randall Jarrell, "The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner."

Refer students to their copies of Excerpt #2. Allow 5 minutes for reading.

Sample Discussion Question

26. How does Jarrell involve us in his poem; what does he suggest that we must fill in?

Leading questions will be necessary here; the teacher may also find it profitable to explain to students the peculiarities of the ball turret, the type of man

(Suggestion operates in several ways here. The story of the death of the ball turret gunner is never actually told, we imaginatively fill in the horror of that death in a glass globe under the belly of the bomber. The horror of the death is suggested in

that the gunner was, and the position which the gunner assumed in operating the ball turret guns.

particular by the last three lines of the poem. In the first three lines the poet makes a comparison between the position of the ball turret gunner assumes and the fetal position, the pre-natal position, and suggests that it is the moment of death when the gunner is "Six miles from earth, loosed from its dream of life," that he is born, that he wakes from his mother's dream, to the nightmare of reality. The final irony of the poem is that the moment of insight is followed by the moment of death. Either death comes too early or insight too late. Another interesting suggestive device of the poem is the speaker's fall "into the State." The ambiguity of the word "State" here is suggestive in that while it might refer to being in "the service of the State," it could also refer to the state of being or beginning.)

Summary

In other words, the poem forces us to cooperate not only in filling in the plot of the story, but in filling in the meaning or theme of the events or plot. Of course, if we consider the whole of Faulkner's story we would probably find that the same kind of cooperation is required there. The point is that our tendency to fill in the blanks can be and is used by speakers and writers to involve us in the evoking of experience and in the evoked experience.

The teacher might wish to refer students to the earlier discussion of the creation of experiences noting the relationship between those responses.

Sample Transition

Another way that the writer or speaker can use our responses to language is a result of the way we perceive language, whether it be written or spoken. We encounter all of the symbols of language in a definite time-space order. You didn't, for example, hear the first word ("you") of the sentence I'm saying right now before you heard me say the last (which is "last"). I think you'll see what I mean if we consider an example.

Sample Discussion Questions

27. What difference would it make if Jarrell began his poem with his last line?

Refer students to their copies of Excerpt #2, re-read poem aloud with last line first.

(The shock which we experience is somewhat diminished.)

28. What differences would it make if the last line were changed so that it read "They washed me out of the turret with a hose when I died?"

(The most obvious difference would be the loss of end rhyme of "froze" and "hose", this coupled with the effect of burying the word hose in the middle of the line reduces the emphasis on the word, and thereby reduces the emphasis on the mechanical response to death that is suggested by the line.)

Let's push our analysis of the fact that we encounter the symbols of language sequentially a little further. In doing so, we'll be primarily interested in noticing the way in which the speaker or writer can use our responses to words or their referents to change our response to other words and their referents. That is, by bringing certain combinations of words and their referents together in a particular order he can qualify or direct our responses to the words and their referents. We'll look at another poem.

Distribute copies of "Birches" by Robert Frost (Oxford Books of American Verse) and allow 5 to 10 minutes for reading.

Leading questions will be necessary in eliciting responses to many of these questions.

29. Why does Frost bother to describe the way that ice storms cause the birches to bend when what he wants to talk about is the way boys swing birches and the way in which the swinging of birches is related to life and death?

(The point of this section seems to be to establish the distinction between what we'd like to think and the truth, between illusion and reality.)

30. What has this to do with the rest of Frost's poem?

(Since Frost continues to use phrases like "I should prefer" and "did like" in the rest of his poem, we're continually aware that the poet is aware of this distinction. In a sense the poet is qualifying his poem, directing our response through controlling our and his belief in what he is saying.)

Let's consider the same kind of control with regard to a smaller unit in the poem.

31. In what contexts do we encounter the word "birches", and in which order are these contexts arranged?

(First we encounter the word as a title where it can be said to be either without context or in the context of the entire poem. Next we see the birches in their natural context bent among other trees; next, we see them in the poet's imagination where their bending is explained imaginatively; then, again, in their natural context where their bending is explained naturally or naturalistically; again, imaginatively and naturally in that the poet would like to think that the way they acquire their permanent bend is by swinging, and in that the description of the way the birch is swung is not unreal or illusory. Next the poet adds a personal touch and dimension in that we find he was a "swinger of birches." The play between illusion and reality continues here in that the poet "dreams" of going back to swinging birches. At this point the poet begins to move out from the particulars to a more universal point, a point that lets in the imaginative dimensions of his poem. He suggests that whole action of swinging birches symbolizes a good way of living in that climbing toward heaven away from a "life" that is "too much" and eventually returning to earth and to life which is "the only place for love" is a way of loving which enables us to both attempt the perfect and love and accept the imperfect. Both the "going" and the "coming" are good, and indeed "One could do worse than be a swinger of birches." The imaginative dimension of the poem operates here in another sense as well. The poet is wishing that death might be like the swinging of birches and allow him a return to the "place for love.")

32. What does Frost accomplish by using the "birches" in these contexts and in this order?

(He evokes in the reader a complex experience related to seeing and speculating on a rather simple natural even. He relates our longing for a return to youth, our aspirations toward heaven or perfection, our love of life, our capacity for imagining, to the natural order of the world. He involves us in the experience of seeing all the possibilities of meaning, illusory or imaginative and real in the simple act of swinging birches. He shares his experience of swinging branches with us and in so doing identifies the birches as the real trees bent by ice storms and

The teacher may wish to explore with students the additional possibility that this poem is a poem about poets and poetry.

swung by boys and the imaginative trees bent by boys, that are a way of life, a ladder to heaven and a way back from death.)

Summary

What we have seen here then is the poet using our tendency to let the symbolic context in which we encounter the symbols of language control our response to symbols.

ATTENTION

He is using his control of the context to share his experience of seeing extended meanings in the events he perceives

Sample Lecture-Discussion Continued

The last of our responses to language that we'll discuss in connection with evocation is our tendency to relate symbols to one another to the extent that a number of less complex symbols can come to function as a single complex symbol. In a sense, the playing of "Taps" at President Kennedy's graveside was a complex symbol of this kind, a summary of, a further symbolization of all of the symbolic acts associated with the funeral. Another example related to the same series of events was the lighting of the "eternal flame." We see writers using symbols in this way, relying on our ability to tie symbols together, to add them up in a number of different ways. The discussion of Frost's poem "Birches" that we just concluded is a case in point. In our reading into and out of Frost's poem we added up the less complex symbols developed by the poet and arrived at a simple complex symbol; "Birches" becomes for us as it did for Frost a statement about a way of life and death. Another use of the complex symbol can be seen in the creation of characters. When writers develop characters like Faulkner's Harris, Browning's lover, Crane's Fred Collins or Jarrell's

Sample Lecture-Discussion
Continued

gunner, they are tying together symbols, in such a way that we arrive at a complex symbol. If we pause for a moment and consider that language is a symbolization, that it is composed of symbols, any sample of language can be viewed as a complex symbol developed by typing together less complex symbols. All of the stories and poems we've studied, then, are complex symbols in this sense. We need to qualify our statement by noting that when we speak of complexity in this way we're speaking of relative complexity, and that while "I Couldn't Get Rid of the Creep That Loved Me" has a certain kind of complexity it is probably somewhat less complex than Frost's poem "Birches."

Distribute Excerpt #7; allow 5 minutes for reading, and read aloud.

Let's consider one final example. This is a poem written by Shelley.

Sample Discussion Questions

33. If we consider all of this poem, around what object is this complex symbol being developed?

(The ruins of a monument found in the middle of a desert.)

34. What is the poet trying to evoke in developing this symbol?

(An experience of the sense of folly which is inherent in the acts of pride of even the "greatest" of men.)

Summary

The point I want to make is that while the complexity of the symbol developed in this poem is not comparable to the complexity of the symbol that Frost develops in his poem, the process is the same. The writer or speaker in developing the symbol, in causing the reader or listener to follow this development, to share in it, evokes the response he desires, communicates the meanings that the

ATTENTION

experience of a real or imagined event suggests to him.

What we have arrived at is that the user of evocative language can count on our responding in certain ways to language. He can count on our reacting to words with conditioned responses. He can expect that we will respond to the sound and shape of his language. He knows that he can develop expectancies or sets in us. He knows we will respond to the referents of words he uses. He can count on our cooperating with him in developing suggestions that he makes. He knows that he can affect our responses by controlling the symbolic context. Finally, he knows we will add things up, will follow or cooperate in the development of complex symbols.

Having said that the writer or speaker knows all of this let me qualify my statements. The extent to which the writer or speaker knows not only that these responses can be counted on, but exactly what words and what arrangements of words will maximize these responses in as wide an audience as possible is the measure of the writer or speaker's ability to use language. In the case of the evocative user of language, his sense of these potentials and the way to use them for maximum effect is the measure of his greatness as an artist, of his ability to share an experience.

One final statement must be made. We've made all of the uses of language and responses to language we discussed seem almost mechanical by analyzing them in the way we have. We've made it seem as if each and every

Sample Lecture-Discussion
Continued

writer were consciously manipulating all of these variables and playing tricks on us. The truth is that almost miraculously the great artists who use language as their medium are able to reshape their experience in words that somehow do take advantage of the ways we respond to language. Much of this must occur at an unconscious or semi-conscious level. Perhaps the best way to suggest what happens is to say that the artist is as sensitive to his medium as he is to experience, that the agency through which he acts so controls him and his act that he is able to accomplish his purpose, to share his experience. All of us, of course, are capable of this to a degree. You and I manage to share our experiences with one another to a degree. The artist has more control over and is better controlled by his agency than we are. He therefore is able to control the experience he shares and to make it clearer and deeper in the sharing.

Sample Introduction

Now that we've talked about the human resources that the user of evocative language can develop let's consider the symbolic resources he has available. In a sense, of course, we've already talked about these resources. Man's responses to language are a function of the symbolic nature of language. However, by considering for a time the peculiarities of the symbolic act, the peculiarities of communicating with symbols, I think we can see even deeper into the special powers and qualities of evocative language, can come to understand more clearly the way evocative

For a differing treatment of the terms used in this section of the unit, the teacher is directed to MPEC 1102. The treatment accorded the terms here relies heavily on the work of Kenneth Burke. See pp. 503-517 of A Grammar of Motives and A Rhetoric of Motives.

language works. In exploring these symbolic resources of language we'll be introducing many specialized terms. You probably have encountered some of these terms before, and you will find that we define and use the terms in ways that are slightly different than the usual ways of defining and using these terms. If you have questions about the way we handle these terms, I hope you'll raise them.

Sample Lecture Discussion

Let me begin by talking in general terms about the kind of language which we label figurative language.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. Do you have any idea what figurative language is?

Leading questions will be necessary here, moreover, the teacher will need to allow sufficient time to develop this answer inductively. Introducing specific examples from our everyday speech (trite or dead figures may be very useful) will be helpful.

(Essentially figurative language is an attempt to use the symbols of language to suggest the inter-relatedness of the things and events experienced by men, and to suggest the meanings emerging from this interrelatedness, meanings which are somewhat beyond the usual denotative and connotative resources of our language.)

Summary

MPEC Units 701, 1002, and 1203 treat language as an abstraction from experience and the teacher may wish to refer to them.

The point is, the symbolic nature of language, the fact that language is an abstraction from experience, enables the user of language to broaden the connotation of the symbols he uses by indicating relationships between the various symbols, and the things and events the symbols represent. If you'll think back to our discussion of the poem "Out of the West of Lucky Riders," I think the way in which the use of figurative language is particularly important in evocation will be apparent. The poem refers to, points to, the events of President's Kennedy death, but by means of certain figures of speech, by means of certain figures of speech, by means of figurative language the poet is able to communicate his experience of that event, an experience in which the particular event is

Summary Continued

related to other events and things imagined and real; he is able to explore the meanings of the event which are beyond our usual uses of language. We've already explored some of these meanings in detail, and I don't think we need to cover that ground again. What we need to do, however, is to try to develop another way of talking about the way that poet and other poets use figurative language to accomplish this purpose. One thing I want you to remember as we do this is that while we're concerned primarily with evocation and with literature, figurative language is not limited to evocative language; it can occur in pure referential and pragmatic referential language. As we discuss the various types of figures of speech I'll try to provide you with some examples which are found in pragmatic and pure referential language. It is worth noting that users of pure referential language try to avoid figurative language since it often interferes with the kind of exact denotation which such speakers and writers strive for. However, even these speakers and writers find figurative language useful under certain circumstances.

Let's consider some specific figures of speech. I think we can begin by considering five basic types of figures. Four of these, metaphor, synecdoche, metonymy, and irony are treated in a very special way by Kenneth Burke. You'll remember that we've used Burke's act-scene-agent-agency-purpose analysis earlier in this unit and found it quite useful in talking about evocative language.

Write the underlined terms on the chalkboard.

Write the underlined term
on the chalkboard.

Write the underlined term
on the chalkboard.

I think we'll find his consideration of these figures quite useful. The fifth type of figurative language that we'll discuss, allusion, differs slightly from the others we'll be discussing, but I think we'll find it to be an extremely important kind of figurative language. In our discussion of allusion we'll be relying on the work of another literary theorist, Northrup Frye.

Burke labels the four figures that we mentioned as master tropes. The word "trope" comes from a Greek word meaning "turn." and it refers to the extensions of language which we have been calling figures or figurative language. In a sense what we do in using "tropes" is to twist or turn language so that we can communicate more completely the experienced meanings of events and things. Burke points out that metaphor, synecdoche, metonymy are closely related to one another, that they tend to grow out of one another. I think as we proceed you'll be able to see what he means by this. I mention it now so that you'll be prepared to encounter the same kind of problems that we encountered when we tried to classify the various uses of language. Our categories will be overlapping and the various examples of figures we discuss may be classifiable in more than one of our categories.

Let's begin with metaphor. Just a few minutes ago, I was talking about twisting language.

Sample Discussion Questions

2. What was I implying about language, about the stuff that language is made of in using this figure of trope? (That language consists of something like rope, metal, plastic, rubber, etc.; something that could be twisted.)

3. Is there any literal sense in which this might be a true statement about language?

(We might be able to visualize taking a sheet of paper with some words printed on it and then twisting the paper, or of printing words in an unusual pattern. Perhaps we could think of voice scrambling recording devices as twisting language.)

If you think about it, though, it is the paper that gets twisted or sounds that gets scrambled, isn't it? Perhaps it's even hard to say that words printed on paper or sounds that are distorted are language in the broad sense that we were using it when we talked about "twisting" language. It's actually hard to think of ways in which language can literally, in a pure referential sense, be "twisted", isn't it?

TEACHER NOTE: The teacher will have to work hard to achieve this response. It is simple but its very simplicity will make it difficult for students to see. Analysis of additional examples may be necessary.

Write underlined definition on the chalkboard.

4. What was I doing when I "twisted" language in this way? What was I doing in using this trope?

(You were trying to explain something in terms of something else.)

I think that this is a good way of defining metaphor.

A metaphor is an attempt to explain something in terms of something else. This is the definition Burke suggests. It is a deceptively simple definition; the possibilities it suggests are not simple. We'll want to look at some examples of the use of metaphor and to discuss the way metaphors relate to the other tropes we'll be discussing. Before we get on to these things, I'd like to suggest to you a few things about metaphor. First I'd like to talk a bit more about the metaphor we were just discussing.

Sample Discussion Questions

5. How do you react when you feel that someone is "twisting" your words?

(We get angry. We feel that the person who "twists"

our words is doing violence to what we meant or intended, almost in the same way we would feel if someone did violence to us by twisting our arm.)

6. How does this affect the way you responded to my talking about figurative language as twisted language?

(We tend to respond somewhat negatively, more or less suspiciously. We feel that a user of figurative language, the twister of words, bears watching.)

Sample Lecture-Discussion
Continued

In other words, the metaphor I used in explaining tropes not only suggested something about the agent who uses figurative language and the act of using such language. In fact, it suggests some things I don't want suggested. My metaphor in other words wasn't a good one, at least in terms of my purpose in using it. Perhaps I should have said stretching or manipulating instead of "twisting". Notice that these terms suggest things about the substance of language just as "twisting" did. Notice also that in some senses they share the weakness of "twisting." We don't like people who "stretch" the truth or who manipulate language. Perhaps it would be best to say that tropes involve the extending of language, which is still a metaphorical way of speaking about what metaphors do, but which seems to be a more accurate or better metaphor for us.

Write underlined terms
on the chalkboard.

Write the underlined term
on the chalkboard.

The point is that the very reasons which cause us to use metaphor to extend language can cause us trouble when we do use metaphor. When we try to explain something in terms of something that is not, we introduce ambiguity. The ambiguity we introduce is useful insofar as it does extend our language, but if we are not careful, we can

over-extend, suggest that which we don't wish to suggest. In this sense we do have to view metaphor suspiciously, just as in another sense we have to use metaphor if we want to make our limited language work in a limitless world.

The final point I want to make grows out of what we've just been saying.

Sample Discussion Questions

7. Since language is a symbolism of experience, what might we say about the relation between language and experience?

(That language is an attempt to explain experience in symbolic terms.)

In other words language is essentially metaphoric. I think this is what Suzanne Langer, a philosopher, is suggesting in this statement about metaphor.

Distribute copies of Susanne Langer's discussion of metaphor on p. 125 of Philosophy in a New Key (New York: Mentor, 1964.)

Distribute the poem "Auto Wreck" by Karl Shapiro in The Pocket Anthology of American Verse, Williams, ed. (New York: Washington Square Press, 1961.)

Now I would like you to examine the use of metaphor in evocative language. I am passing out a poem by Karl Shapiro which attempts to explain the poet's experience of the events which characteristically follow an automobile accident. In recreating this experience for us the poet uses metaphor. Let's consider the way in which the poet extends his language through metaphor.

Sample Discussion Questions

The teacher may find it necessary to explain that bells rather than sirens are used on ambulances in many areas of the country and abroad.

8. What is being described literally in the first three lines of the poem?

(The sound of an ambulance bell and the flashing red light coming from the top of the ambulance.)

9. What does the poet suggest with the words "beating" beating, "pulsing" and "artery"?

(That the first sound and the first sight of the ambulance at the moment seemed like the sound and sight of a heart pumping blood.)

10. What other metaphoric descriptions of the ambulance and its movements does the poet provide in the first stanza of the poem?

(The ambulance like a bird "floats down," "wings in a heavy curve"; it like a box of light "empties" its contents at the scene of the accident, only to be refilled, to become the "little hospital" which "rocking" like a cradle carries the mangled out of rather than into life.)

11. Why does the poet describe the approach and departure of the ambulance metaphorically, why does he extend the language in this way?

(In order to give us some sense of the way the ambulance relates to the broad questions of life and death implicit in this particular instance of living and dying. The pulsing sound and light of the ambulance mirror the living and dying wounds and sights of the heart, the fundamental locus of human living and dying. The "winging" approach of the ambulance suggests a set of conflicting or ambiguous possibilities inherent in the function of the ambulance. It might be viewed as a bird of prey, or carrion, feeding on the dead and dying of the accident, or as an angel of mercy or an angel of death "floating down" to the scene of destruction. Finally, it is the "little hospital" which, "rocking" carries away its "terrible cargo" of mangled, dead, or dying victims. Here again note the ambiguity the poet forces on us. We are not sure whether the "little hospital" is "rocking" the victims to a permanent sleep, or back to health. In a sense the poet has left the ambulance as an open-ended symbol of life and death, of mercy and cruelty. He has, then, through metaphor, made the events of the coming and leaving of the ambulance take on wider significance. He has seen and described these events in terms of the totality of his experience of them.)

Let's consider similar uses of metaphor in the remainder of the poem.

12. What does the poet accomplish by metaphorically making the wrecks "Empty husks of locusts?"

(He suggests the death-like emptiness of the wrecks, and again ties the experience to the broader experience of life and death, this time in terms of the life cycle of an insect. The more specific dimensions of this metaphor are also revealing. The husk is the

part of locusts, or of plants which can be discarded, the life or life sustaining essence is that which can't be discarded.)

13. What are the metaphors the poet uses in the third stanza?

(Throats as tight as tourniquets; "feet bound with splints"; "Like convalescents, etc."; "touching a wound that opens to our richest horror.")

14. What are the metaphors the poet uses in the final stanza?

("death in war is done by hands"; "But this invites, etc.")

15. How do the metaphors the poet uses in these stanzas extend the language to recreate his experience of the event for us?

(They suggest in the third stanza the poet's sense of the way the accident involves him personally even to the extent that he is "tourniqueted" and "splinted," that he assumes the airs and attitudes of the convalescent, that he experiences the "richest horror" of "touching a wound" that is his own. In the fourth stanza the metaphors move us out again to the broader questions of living and dying, and what causes living and dying. The accident metaphorically acquires the power of destroying our usual cause and effect explanations of death and life; our sense of something being completed is "spattered" across the "expedient and wicked stones" of highways. To put the metaphorical explanation of a metaphor another way we see the "expedient" stones of the highway in a new sense. The stones are wicked because the death they cause or permit seems to be less than human, to have no "hands", to lack logic, to be without cause, to be the manifestation of an evil force understandable only in terms of mystery, of the occult. The poet ties his poem to the age old questions of life and death. "Why does this man die and that man live; why do I live while he dies; why do the "innocent" die?)

Summary

In a word, through his metaphor Karl Shapiro is able to share with us his experience physically, emotionally, and intellectually. The particular event which he treats is one we all have some experience with, but through using metaphor, the poet brings our experience of similar

events into contact with his, relates our experience to his and to the broader experience of life and death. He extends language to communicate more completely with his audience.

I think "Auto Wreck" demonstrates fairly clearly the importance of metaphor as a resource for evocation. Sharing experience depends on our seeing or feeling the relationships between events and things, between the symbols we use in describing events or that are suggested by events. Metaphor, therefore, is a key to the sharing of experience.

Sample Introduction

Having treated metaphor at some length I think we can proceed a little more rapidly in discussing the other tropes we mentioned. This will be possible because of the interrelationships between these figures of speech. By referring back to metaphor in discussing metonymy, synecdoche, irony, and allusion, I think we can save ourselves some steps. Let's begin with metonymy.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. If I say that someone has an iron will, what do I mean?
(That he is strong willed. That he makes others agree with his decisions or points of view.)
2. In the literal sense is "will" something which has a substance that could be iron or iron-like?
(No.)
3. What is the basic difference between the substances of the referents of the word "iron" and the word "will" (as used in the expression strong-willed)?
(Iron refers to a physical or material substance; will to a non-physical or non-material substance. To put it another way, iron has a substance which can be seen and touched; will has substance only in a symbolic or metaphoric sense, its substance cannot be seen or touched.)

4. What are we doing, then, in speaking or writing of someone who is iron-willed?

(We are attempting to convey or explain the non-physical in terms of the physical, that which is without physical substance in terms of that which has physical substance.)

Write the underlined definition on the chalkboard.

Metonymy, then, is the attempt to convey non-physical or symbolic substance through reference to physical substance. We very commonly use metonymy to explain the events occurring around us. We speak, for example, of people being red-faced when we want to indicate that they are angry or ashamed. In some ways the attempt to explain all human behavior in terms of observable behavior, which is the task that some psychologists set for themselves is an example of metonymy. This notion is not as new as it might seem. Medieval psychologists and physicians often discussed physical and mental health in terms of "humors." The humors were not only internal aspects of mind and body, but they manifested themselves in such things as a person's complexion or his manner of speaking; in other words, the non-physical "state -of-mind" of an individual could be explained in terms of physical or observable qualities like complexion.

Notice that there are some obvious relationships between metaphor, as we have defined it, and metonymy. In essence metonymy is the attempt to explain the non-physical in terms of the physical; metonymy is, therefore, metaphoric. We would expect, then, that the same motives prompt metonymy, and that the same dangers are involved in using metonymy.

ATTENTION

That is, metonymy is a means of extending language and as such it helps us to deal with our changing world. On the other hand, metonymy can also over-extend the language, can suggest that which is not true or relevant. Racists, for example, often use the physical characteristics of a race to suggest something about the moral or intellectual characteristics of the same race. What happens in such cases is that figurative language is treated as if it were literally true; the word is confused with the thing.

Assignment

Distribute and read the paragraph describing the convict which begins "A fearful man..." Also distribute the closing section of the first chapter which begins "At the same time."

I think that now we ought to consider the use of metonymy in evocation. I'd like to have you try this analysis of the use of metonymy individually before we discuss it in class. The selection I'm passing out is taken from the opening scene of Charles Dicken's novel Great Expectations. In this scene Pip, the young hero of the novel, confronts an escaped convict. The first passage is a description of the convict. The second is the closing section of the first chapter. At this moment the convict is walking away from Pip. He has given Pip instruction about bringing him food and clothing and is walking back out into the moor where the first scene is set.

What I'd like you to do is discuss in a two or three page paper, the way that Dickens uses metonymy in these passages. Try to be as specific as we were in discussing Shapiro's use of metaphor in "Auto Wreck". Your main

concerns will be to identify the uses of metonymy and to explain what Dickens is able to accomplish through using the device. You'll probably find that this is somewhat easier to do with the first passage than it is with the second. Perhaps I can help you by suggesting that we can use metonymy and metaphor in broader ways than those we have thus far discussed. "Auto Wreck" for example, can be viewed as an explanation of life and death and man's reaction to life and death in terms of an "auto wreck." Here we consider the entire poem as a metaphor. A similar approach to the use of metonymy in the second passage from Great Expectations may prove helpful.

The Teacher will want to give students class time to work on this paper. It might prove useful to have students break up into small groups to discuss the assignment. If this is done the teacher may wish to skip the written assignment and develop the subsequent class discussion on the basis of what the groups develop. In either case, a discussion should follow the completion of the assignment. The students will probably be able to spot Dickens' use of the various objects that have affected the convict and the clothing he is wearing to suggest his desperate state of mind. If not, the teacher can call attention to this metonymic device by asking students why Dickens bothers to mention these things. The second passage will create more difficulties but the teacher should be able to lead students to a satisfactory answer by exploring with them questions such as "Why does Dickens have Pip describe the departure of the convict in such detail?" and "What does this description tell us about Pip, and his reaction to this first meeting with the convict?" Eventually the teacher should be able to elicit from the students that Pip's description of the objects he sees, or the way he perceives these objects, are a result of his state of mind. Here Dickens, by describing the physical scene, as Pip sees it, is able to suggest something about Pip's total response to the scene which is both physical and non-physical. Finally, the teacher should call attention to the way in which metonymy particularizes the non-physical, the way in which it makes specific, for example, the particular kind of desperation Pip senses in the convict, or mixture of horror, fascination and dread that Pip feels as the convict departs.

Summary

ATTENTION

Metonymy, then, provides the writer or speaker who uses language evocatively, with an exceptionally useful means of conveying and particularizing the emotional states of characters, the personality of characters, the prevailing mood at a given moment. In conveying the non-material through reference to the material, the writer or speaker is able to make specific the abstract, to personalize the impersonal.

Now let's consider the use of synecdoche.

Sample Discussion Questions

1. What do we mean when we say that a farmer has 100 head of cattle?

(That he has 100 cows, bulls, or steers.)

2. To what does the word "head" refer in this expression?

(The individual cows, bulls or steers.)

In other words, we don't mean that the farmer has only the heads of the animals in question. The word head in this expression is being used to refer to the entire animal. This use of the part to signify the whole is an example of synecdoche. In using synecdoche we operate as though word and thing, part and whole, container and that contained, matter and the thing made, cause and effect, genus and species, were equivalent. That is, we feel free to use the part to signify or stand for the whole, or the whole to signify or stand for the part. During political conventions, for example, we hear people saying "Minnesota casts its votes for..." when actually it is a delegation representing one of Minnesota's political parties, a part of a political party, which

Write the underlined definition on the chalkboard.

Sample Lecture-Discussion
Continued

which represents a part of the population of Minnesota, which is casting its votes. In the same general situation we will hear someone say that the "Minnesota delegation" favored such and such as action. In this case, the word "delegation" may be used to refer to a majority of the delegation, a part of the delegation, whose view prevailed. Similarly, whenever we say "Congress passed a bill" we are speaking of a part as though it were the whole. We could go on developing examples in which parts and wholes, containers and things contained, causes and effects, etc., are used to signify one another indefinitely. However, our purposes can best be served by turning to the use of synecdoche in evocative language.

Distribute copies of Psalm
XXIII.

Let's consider an example of synecdoche in one of the ancient poems of the Old Testament. The poem I'm distributing is one of the most famous of the psalms supposed to have been written by King David. In looking at the poem we should try to be aware of the use of metaphor and metonymy as well as synecdoche. I think we can proceed best by considering the poem trope by trope, and by noting the way the various figures of speech complement and blend into one another. In doing this, not only will we see the way in which David communicates his experience, his sense of grace, but we will see how metaphor, metonymy, and synecdoche are related to and grow out of one another.

Sample Discussion Questions

3. What kind of figure do we encounter in "The Lord is my shepherd"?

(A metaphor. It attempts to explain the relationship between God and man in terms of the relationship between the shepherd and his sheep.)

4. What do we encounter in "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still water"?

(First we see an extension of the opening metaphor. Second we see the non-physical relationship of God to man being treated in terms of the physical way in which man can sense God's grace, that is, a metonymic dimension appears. Third, two of the things the shepherd does, bedding down the sheep, and leading them to water, are used to synecdochically suggest all of the care God takes of man.)

In other words, in the second line of his poem David uses metonymy and synecdoche to explore more deeply the metaphoric extension of language with which he opens his poem. What we should particularly note here is the way in which figurative language turns back upon itself, pursues its own meaning. The writer here is attempting to share his experience by exploring the way he verbalizes that experience. This is exactly the way we share the writer's experience.

Sample Discussion Questions

5. How is the interplay between metaphor, metonymy and synecdoche introduced in the opening lines of the poem developed in the rest of the poem?

(In the third line of the poem David opens with a literal statement of the function of grace much like the "I shall not want" of his first line. He then turns back to the metaphoric paths in which God's grace will lead his sheep. He also suggests in non-physical terms the quality of the paths of righteousness. Next, he uses the physical "walk," "valley," and "shadow" to suggest something about life, the place of living and death. Here again metaphor, metonymy and synecdoche operate together. The "walk" in the "valley of the shadow of death" is an extension of the basic metaphor, a synecdochic representation of life, and a metonymic suggestion about the quality of life. The blending of literal and figurative senses leads us to the totally figurative concluding section of line 4 which contrasts with the literal

opening of line 3. The metaphoric rod and staff, which synecdochically represent the shepherd and his position of authority and control (sign representing that which it signifies), metonymically suggest the quality of the benevolent control exercised by God. David now explores further his original metaphor, by introducing a new metaphor. Here the relationship between God and man is considered in terms of the arrival of a lowly servant at the house of his Lord who is strong enough to protect him from his enemies, who is gracious enough to spread a feast before him, who does him the honor of anointing him, who supplies his "wants" in such profusion that the "cup runneth over." Again, contained in this metaphor are metonymic and synecdochic dimensions. The various actions attributed to the Lord are physical acts meant to suggest non-physical or spiritual acts and they synecdochically suggest the totality of the ways in which the benevolent Lord, the shepherd, or God provides for his servant, his sheep, or man. Finally, David restates the literal point of his discussion of grace and concludes with a return to the metaphor of dwelling in the house of his Lord, a metaphor which seen in the light of the rest of the poem metonymically portrays the nature of the relationship between God and man and synecdochically represents not only the acceptance of grace but the total meaning of both the poem and the experience.)

Summary

Now, I think you can see not only the way synecdoche can be used, but the complexity of the way a language operates symbolically. Earlier I said that the tropes we would study would be interrelated. I think you have a better idea of what I meant now. Metaphor, metonymy, and synecdoche blend together so thoroughly that they are almost indistinguishable. At the same time by attempting to distinguish between them, as we just have, we can increase our understanding of both the meaning intended by the writer or speaker and of the language which is being used by the writer or speaker; we can see more clearly the way in which the writer or speaker has struggled with the limits of his language.

Sample Lecture Discussion

The final trope mentioned by Burke in his discussion of the master tropes is irony. You have all probably heard this term a good many times more than you've heard the terms "metaphor," "synecdoche," and "metonymy."

ATTENTION

"Irony" is a term that has a general sense and which is part of our working vocabulary. We don't limit its use to discussions of language and literature. I don't mean to imply by this that terms like "metaphor," "metonymy" and "synecdoche" should be used only in discussions of language and literature, or that irony is misused in being applied to language and literature. What I'm driving at is that many of you probably already have some notion about what "irony" is. I think we ought to start our discussion by talking about the common meanings for the term which we share. In the course of our discussion we will sharpen our definition of the term in order to make it more useful or usable in terms of our purposes. At present we need to examine the usual meanings of the term because ultimately we will derive our special sense from these common senses. The question which suggests itself immediately is:

Sample Discussion Question

1. What do we mean when we say that something is ironic?

Students will respond with a variety of answers and will probably be a little confused about the meanings of the term. Leading questions will help and referring students to the dictionary should also be useful. If students cannot reach this answer the teacher may wish to ask for examples and arrive at an equivalent statement.

(That a situation or a statement about a situation suggests something contrary to our expectations, something which contradicts our usual sense of what is meant by, or what should follow from, a situation or a statement about a situation.)

Irony, then, is calling the defensive end of the

Green Bay Packers, who weighs 280 pounds and is

6'5" tall, wee Willie Davis, or saying that living is

dying because each second that we live is bringing us closer to death. It's important to notice that we also speak of events as being ironic. For example, we call the situation in which a tight rope walker is seriously injured by falling down in his own home, ironic. The sudden death of a young man who is "full of life" is similarly labeled ironic.

Write the underlined phrase on the chalkboard.

In fact, situational irony provides an excellent point of departure for any discussion of irony and its use in evocative language. Our first experiences with irony in literature frequently rely on our recognition of situations which are ironic. One of the most frequently anthologized short-story writers of the twentieth century, O. Henry (William Sydney Porter), relied almost exclusively on plots which used ironic situations or "surprise endings" as they are frequently called. You've all probably read at least one or two of his stories. One of his most famous is a Christmas story, "The Gift of Magic."

Sample Discussion Questions

Teacher Note: If enough students have read the story, you can ask some of them to summarize the plot for the rest of the class. If not, the teacher can either summarize the story himself or can assign it to the class. (See also O. Henry, The Four Million, (N.Y.: Doubleday, 1902.)

2. How many of you have read the story?

(See note.)

3. How would you summarize the plot of this story?

(See note.)

4. In what way is the plot ironic?

(The sudden revelation that Della had sold her hair to buy Jim a fob chain for the watch he had sold to buy a comb for Della's hair.)

The irony here is not terribly subtle. O. Henry has, in fact, been rather heavily criticized for his over-

use of obvious ironies of this kind. The point is the user of evocative language can use situational ironies as a plot device if he is telling or writing a story. Jokes, for example, often rely on such ironies.

Though situational ironies can be and are used much more subtly and imaginatively by writers and speakers than they are used by O. Henry, they don't constitute the major use of irony in evocative language. For the moment, I'd like to leave our discussion of such ironies and confine our discussion to ironic uses of language. Since we are primarily concerned with figurative language at the moment, this seems justifiable.

Let's rephrase our original definition of irony slightly at this point. Linguistic irony involves saying or writing something in such a way that it suggests something contrary to our expectations or contradicts our sense of what is meant by, or follows from, the given statement.

A prime example of such irony is contained in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar. Antony's speech to the Roman populace at the time of Caesar's funeral, which many of you have probably read before, contains several examples of irony. Let's examine it briefly and consider the most obvious use of irony in the speech.

5. What does Antony mean when he calls Brutus "an honorable man" at several points in his speech?

(That Brutus is a thoroughly dishonorable man, a murderer, a traitor, a villain.)

This example is also treated in MPEC Unit 1102.

Distribute Excerpt #8.

Sample Discussion Question

If time is available the teacher may wish to explain the other ironies in his speech.

6. How does Antony suggest this by calling Brutus an honorable man?

(By quoting Brutus' claim that Caesar was ambitious and by introducing evidences of Caesar's courage, leadership, mercy and restraint, evidences which refute Brutus' claim. In each case he follows the refutation with the claim that Brutus is an honorable man. Ultimately Brutus' honor rather than Caesar's ambition becomes questionable.)

Another way of suggesting what happens here is to say Antony speaks as though he accepted two claims; first, that Caesar was an ambitious man who wished to become a tyrant, and second, that Brutus was a noble man who acted to prevent tyranny.

7. If these claims are true, what is the simple conclusion that we must make?

(That Brutus is an honorable man who has acted justly to protect his fellow citizens.)

Given these propositions, however, Antony proceeds to introduce evidence which disproves the first of these claims, and in spite of the doubts raised by this evidence he continues to conclude "Brutus is an honorable man."

Sample Discussion Question

8. Is the conclusion that "Brutus is an honorable man" still a simple conclusion; are the citizens of Rome facing the same simple set of facts?

(No. The matter has become complicated, complicated to the point where saying "And, sure, he is an honorable man" is not to say that Brutus is an honorable man, but is to question his honor in the most profound way.)

Essentially, this is what irony always does; it increases complexity, makes the simple complicated. To show you what I mean, let me push this selection from Shakespeare's play a little further. So far we have talked about the way Mark Antony used irony in his speech.

From: Julius Caesar

William Shakespeare

ANTONY: Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them,
The good is oft interred with their bones.
So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus 5
Hath told you Caesar was ambitious.
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Caesar answered it.
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest--
For Brutus is an honorable man, 10
So are they all, all honorable men--
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.
He was my friend, faithful and just to me,
But Brutus is an honorable man.
He hath brought many captives home to Rome, 15
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill.
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept--
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff.
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious, 20
And Brutus is an honorable man.
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition?
And, sure, he is an honorable man. 25

If students have read the play
this may be handled inductively

If students have recently read
the play or remember it well
the following assignment can
be dropped.

Distribute Marchette Chutis
"Julius Caesar" from Stories
from Shakespeare (N. Y.: 1956.)
Allow 25 to 30 minutes for
reading.

The teacher may need to ask
leading questions which point
specifically to the attitudes
of the other characters in the
play.

Suppose we consider what Shakespeare was doing in writing this speech. Shakespeare is literally putting the words in Antony's mouth. If we recognize that the tragic hero, the noble man with a tragic flaw, in Shakespeare's case Brutus, kills Caesar because he is misled and believes it to be his duty, the irony increases, the complexity increases. What we see is the writer attacking the honor of a character who he has portrayed as honorable, by calling him honorable. It is as though Shakespeare were saying Brutus was honorable despite his gullibility, so honorable that even the man who had to question his honor did it by calling him honorable. I think if you read this summary of the play you'll see what I mean.

Now let me ask you another question.

9. If we consider Antony's attitude as one way of viewing Brutus and his honor, Brutus' attitude toward himself and his honor as another, and the various attitudes of each of the other characters in the play as representing still other views of Brutus and his honor what might we say was one of the themes of the play?

(A consideration of what honor involves and how it can be misled, or misleading.)

In other words, by showing us all of these varying views of the honorable man, who might have saved himself had he been less honorable, Shakespeare tries to give us an understanding of what a complex quality honor is, he tries to show us honor in all of its perspectives.

Let me dwell on this word, perspectives, for a moment. In doing this, I want to go back to the other tropes we've discussed and consider the way they relate to irony. Burke

Write the underlined term
on the chalkboard.

Summary

Write underlined definition
on the chalkboard.

suggests that in using metaphor, in explaining things in terms of other things we are establishing a perspective, that we are seeing things in their relations to other things. He then defines irony as "The perspective of perspectives," that is, the use of terms, metaphors, or perspectives in such a way that a total perspective, term, or metaphor emerges. This ironic perspective, includes all of the other perspectives that were used in developing it, and recognizes that none of these "sub-perspectives can be treated as precisely right or wrong." Or, to put it in another way, irony, by presenting all of the "sub-perspectives" gives us a complex perspective which pulls together all of the relevant view of the event or the description of the event.

Sample Summary Continued

Let's go back to our example and see if we can make the point clearer. The attitudes of various characters toward Brutus and his honor at various times constitute an exploration of the possible reactions to the acts of a man of honor. Shakespeare uses metaphor, metonymy, and synecdoche to demonstrate and explain these attitudes; that is, he attempts to establish perspective through reference to other things. When we consider all of these attitudes in all of the ways they are presented, when we try to establish a perspective on these perspectives, we arrive at an ironic view. This view recognizes the extent to which it is possible to claim that Brutus was honorable and the extent to which it is impossible to make such a claim; it recognizes the way in which these various

ATTENTION

views complement each other; it recognizes complexity.

ATTENTION

I'd like to mention a few other things before we leave our discussion of irony. First you'll notice that our new definition of irony as a perspective of perspectives does not disregard or conflict with our early definition. It is broader, however. We said initially that irony occurred when a situation or a statement about a situation suggests something contrary to our expectancies, something which contradicts our usual sense of what is meant by, or follows from, a situation or a statement about a situation. This is still implied in our new definition. We can talk about the way in which calling Willie Davis Wee Willie demonstrates a complex perspective about the confusion of word and thing, or the way in which living can be seen in perspective as dying, or the way that O. Henry's surprise ending establishes a complex perspective in terms of the actions of his characters. However, now we can also recognize more clearly the fundamental irony involved in trying to explain anything in terms of something which it is not, the fundamental irony of language. Calling Wee Willie, Wee Willie, does not make Willie wee; saying that living is dying does not make life death. In these cases language is extended to help us develop perspectives, but in these cases language can also suggest its limits by giving us a perspective which indicates those limits, by suggesting its own complexity and the complexity of the world it deals with. This complexity is one of the most obvious characteristics of

Sample Summary Continued

Assignment

Distribute Henry Reed's "Naming of Parts" from Immortal Poems of the English Language.

The teacher may find it necessary to tell students that one of the voices is that of a drill instructor naming the parts of a rifle.

our experience of world and of language, and when the writer or speaker attempts to share experience he finds irony useful for this very reason.

I'm passing out a poem which depends on irony in a very fundamental way. I'm hoping that you'll be able to use our notions about irony to discover the limits of the meaning of the experience being shared. I think two things that might help you in doing this are recognizing that there are essentially two voices in the poem, and that the irony of the poem is related to the way these voices are related to one another. Perhaps Burke's suggestion that irony recognizes the necessity of having opposing points of view, of having a disease if one is to have a cure, a villain if one is to have a hero, an antagonist if one is to have a protagonist, a death if one is to have life, will be of some help in analyzing the poem. I want you to write no more than two pages on the way that irony is used to reveal complexity, to give us a perspective of perspectives in this poem.

Sample Lecture-Discussion

Now I want to discuss Allusion, the fifth figure of speech that I mentioned when we started talking about figures of speech. We've just finished talking about the way irony operates, and I think I can best demonstrate the importance of allusion by talking about an irony.

Sample Discussion Question

It is possible that the students will respond with both this meaning and the older meaning. The teacher can then point out that the newer sense is the one given here.

1. What does the proverb "A rolling stone gathers no moss" mean?

(That a person who is on the move, who is trying new things or developing new ideas does not run the risk of getting stuck in a rut.)

He can continue discussion by suggesting that the newer meaning may replace the old meaning and adjust his subsequent remarks appropriately.

Suppose I told you that originally this proverb had exactly the opposite meaning, that it was an argument for stability. The proverb originally meant that if one was always on the move, was shiftless, he would never be able to establish himself. Once we know both of these meanings our sense of the meaning of this proverb is changed. We could label this new double meaning as ironic, in that, like our statement about living as dying, it suggests the way in which anything depends upon its opposite for its meaning. The two meanings of the proverb become a pair of opposites like hero and villain or cure and disease, opposites which must be defined in terms of each other. Perhaps a better way of saying the same thing is to say that we must be aware of both meanings of the proverb, whenever we hear it used we respond in a complex way. We respond to the proverb with a perspective that develops from its opposite meanings, even if the context in which the proverb is used clearly shows us which meaning is intended. Now let me ask you an obvious question.

ATTENTION

Sample Discussion Question

2. What is the necessary condition if we are to have such a perspective?

(We have to be aware of both meanings.)

It's worth noting that this kind of awareness is always necessary if we are going to respond to irony. We didn't really state this notion in our discussion of irony, but we implied it. Not knowing who Wee Willie Davis is, or not knowing that Shakespeare does portray

Brutus as an honorable man would have prevented us from sensing the irony involved in the cases we discussed.

Now let's see if we can use our discussion of the irony we discovered in this example to reveal something about the nature of allusion.

Sample Discussion Questions

Leading questions may be necessary, and if the students in the class know both meanings it will be necessary to project the problem in some person in the future.

3. How would you acquire a knowledge of the older meaning of the proverb if someone didn't tell you?

(By encountering it being used in a context where the older meaning was the obviously intended meaning or by having someone tell us about this meaning.)

4. Since people seldom explain what they mean by a proverb (except in an artificial situation like the one we're currently in), and since we are more likely to find the proverb used in its newer sense in the written and spoken language of our own time, where would we be most likely to encounter the older meaning?

(In the written records of our language in an earlier period.)

Sample Lecture-Discussion Continued

We would acquire this older meaning, then, through a knowledge of historical contexts in which the proverb had previously been used. The potential which language has to suggest the ties between the present and the past, the way that language preserves its own past and the past events which it is used to describe, is the potential which allusion exploits. Allusion is a metaphoric use of language to explain the present in terms of the past. In other words, if we see the meaning of "a rolling stone gathers no moss" as ironic, it is because we see its present meanings in terms of its past meaning.

Such uses of language are obviously not confined to literature. You and I frequently will say to each other

Sample Lecture-Discussion
Continued

that something that is currently happening to us reminds us of a past incident in our lives, of a movie we've seen, of a book we've read, of a historical event or series of events. We may even go on to explain the present in terms of that past event. During the recent election both major political parties continually referred to the words and deeds of Abraham Lincoln because they felt that the need for political action in the area of civil rights at the present moment could be explored by reference to a similar need for action at the time for Lincoln's presidency. Similarly, as we noted earlier, speakers and writers, using language descriptively, pragmatically, and evocatively, spoke of President Kennedy's assassination with reference to Lincoln's assassination. If we think of these uses of language as being attempts to establish historical perspective, the metaphoric or figurative nature they possess becomes more apparent. Burke, you'll remember, speaks of both metaphor and irony as involving the development of perspectives.

As we would expect, allusion is widely used in evocative language. Through it, the writer or speaker is able to share his own experience of the past and to use the reader's or listeners experience of the past to share in a present experience. Evocative language can allude to events or to the language used to describe, explain, evaluate or evoke the experience of those events. The poem we studied earlier, "Out of the West of Lucky Riders,"

is a case in point.

5. What, in particular, did Mr. Levoy, the writer of that poem, do to allude to Lincoln's death?

(He used lines from Whitman's poem "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" which was written to commemorate Lincoln's death.)

In other words, in a poem alluding to the event of President Kennedy's death, the writer alludes the words of another writer alluding to the event of another president's death. We could explore the kinds of allusion operating in Mr. Levoy's poem further, but since we have already spent a great deal of time on that poem let's consider another poem which uses another slightly different kind of allusion. The poem I'm passing out is W. B. Yeats' "The Magi."

From: Yeats, W. B. The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats. New York: Macmillan, 1956.

Sample Discussion Questions

6. To what in general is Yeats' poem alluding?

(The New Testament story of the visitation of the infant Jesus by the three eastern wisemen or kings.)

7. What other specific allusions are contained in the poem?

(A reference to the places of Christ's death and birth.)

8. What does the physical description that Yeats gives us of the Magi suggest might be another element of allusion in his poem?

(The description suggest the figurines, the statues used by Christians of many denominations in small sets of figurines or statues to commemorate the Nativity)

9. What is the point the poet is making here and how do the allusions help him to make it?

(The poet seems to be experiencing a kind of vision of some legendary kings which makes him apprehensive. This vision seems to be related to a feeling that something of vast import to humanity is expected by these legendary figures. The allusions suggest the import of the awaited event because of the import of

Refer students to their copies of the poem.

Leading questions may be necessary (cf. lines 7 & 8)

To help students to answer this question completely the teacher would have to talk a bit about Yeats' general philosophy and other of his poems which demonstrate his cyclical theory of

history (e.g. "The Second Coming"). If time is not available for such a study leading questions should help in eliciting this response.

This section will not be necessary if a discussion of Yeats' philosophy has been conducted.

the legendary Magi did await, sought and found. The import is further suggested by the allusion to figurines still used after almost 2000 years to commemorate the deeds of the Magi and of Christ. Finally, the allusions to the birth and death of Christ suggest how the event is tied to the most fundamental of the questions concerning mankind, the questions of life and death. The effect of Christ's life and death on living and dying in subsequent eras of Western civilization seems relevant, also.)

If we also think for a moment about some of the beliefs of Christians, we can remember that a second coming of Christ on the last day is a part of those beliefs. Once we think about this notion another possible allusion might be contained in this poem. The poet might be alluding to this prophesied event. The point is, in attempting to share his experience in this case the poet relies heavily on allusion. He attempts by explaining in terms of the past his present feeling to give us his sense of the immediate future. In this case, he alludes not only to past events and the language used to describe, explain, evaluate or evoke an experience of those events, but to the ritual and religious significance related to those events. This is a common practice in literature. Moreover, Christianity is not the only source of such allusions. All of man's beliefs, myths and rituals can be and are alluded to.

Summary

Distribute copies of pp. 68-70 of Frye's The Educated Imagination beginning with "Literature tends to be very allusive" and ending with "multiplication table."

We could go exploring allusion for some time, but I think I can help you to get a sense of the importance of allusion in evocative language by simply having you read a statement about allusion by Northrop Frye, a well-known modern critic.

ATTENTION:

Teachers interested in carrying the study of figurative language further can find a list of figures given traditional definitions in Appendix B of the unit. This list has been adapted from MPEC Unit 1102. Appendix C contains a differing treatment of irony.

In addition to studying further figurative language the teacher may choose one of two courses at this point. The following section of this unit is designed for use with more able students. If the teacher decides not to use it, he can proceed to p. of this unit and use the concluding exercises. A statement similar to that on pp. 98 and 99 should precede these exercises.

Sample Summary Lecture-
Discussion

We've spent a good deal of time now talking about some of the human and symbolic resources of our language which the user of evocative language might use. There are two things that we should note. First, there are other specific types of tropes which we have not discussed. A discussion of all of these tropes would take more time than we have and in addition I believe we could treat most of these figures as sub-types of figures we've already discussed. The second thing I think we ought to mention is that we've discussed these tropes, in many cases, as though they operated in isolation from one another. We did notice some of the interplay that is possible when we discussed the XXIII Psalm. I think we ought to consider this aspect of the use of figurative language a bit further. In so doing I think we can summarize and expand our understanding of the use of the symbolic resources of languages in evocation.

Cf. pp. 42 and 43 of this unit.

This could be conducted as an inductive review.

Let me remind you about some conclusions that we reached some time ago. We arrived at a conclusion about the motives that led to the use of evocative language. As we begin to talk about the way the symbolic resources of our language can be tied together in evocation, we need to remember that conclusion. We said that the need to

Sample Lecture-Discussion
Continued

share experience was the principle motive for the use of evocative language. We added that the experience shared had to have emotional as well as ideational content. Finally, we said that it had to grow out of or relate to the individual experiences of producer and consumer, speaker or writer and listener or reader.

What we have been doing since we arrived at this conclusion about the motive for evocation is to explore the ways in which the human resources and symbolic resources of language lend themselves to satisfying the need to share experience in this particular way. I think we have succeeded in demonstrating that these resources of language can be used in this way. What we need to do now is to find a way of talking about what happens when all of these resources are used at the same time and an experience is, in fact, shared.

In order to do this I find it necessary to introduce another term. Before I introduce it, I want to make a few comments. I am very aware that the discussion I'm undertaking is complicated, abstract, and technical, perhaps too much so, and I will try to provide an example to show you in more concrete terms what I mean. I think before we begin though, that we should try to answer a pertinent question. I guess that you're wondering why we should add any more terms to the welter of terms we've already introduced into our discussion of evocative language.

Sample Lecture-Discussion
Continued

I think there is only one justification. Throughout this unit we've been taking things apart to see how they tick. We've been reading meanings into and out of everything from the "XXXIII Psalm" to the story "I Couldn't Get Rid of the Creep Who Loved Me." Before we're through, we'll do this a few more times. It is valuable to see what makes things tick, but eventually we need to put them back together and to appreciate the tick as though it were still a mystery to us. Perhaps a better way of saying the same thing is to say that up to this point we've been analyzing literature, intellectualizing about literature. There is nothing wrong in doing this as long as we recognize that by taking literature apart we're ignoring its guts. What the writer or or speaker intends is that we respond viscerally as well as intellectually to his work. He wants us to respond as we initially did to the tape of the Kennedy funeral, to synthesize, to put together, the very things we've been taking apart or analyzing. I don't mean that the analysis isn't useful. In fact, it may help us to experience more completely and deeply the very thing the writer or speaker intended. In the last analysis, however, there must be a synthesis, and we must respond totally to the total experience.

ATTENTION

Mr. T. S. Eliot has provided us with a term and a basic notion which enables us to label this total response. He call this combined effect of the various resources of

Write the underlined term
on the chalkboard.

The teacher may wish to ditto
and distribute the definitions
of the objective correlative
contained in this section.

ATTENTION

language as an "objective correlative." If we substitute a crucial bit of our terminology in Eliot's definition of the objective correlative and interpret it properly, I think his definition explains well what happens when the resources of language are pooled in evocation. Eliot says, "The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative,' in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given the emotion is immediately evoked." In our terms, Mr. Eliot's "emotion" is individual experience. Perhaps we would also want to substitute the notion of sharing individual experience for "expressing emotion."

Write the underlined definition
on the chalkboard.

ATTENTION

Given these substitutions then we might legitimately paraphrase Mr. Eliot in this way: The objective correlative is a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events, presented by the writer or speaker through his use of the human and symbolic resources of language, in such a way that the individual experience of the writer or speaker is recreated to evoke an individual experience for the reader or listener.

What we need to note here is that we have made Eliot's definition more specific by limiting it to literature, and that we have made the final section more explicit by suggesting that what takes place involves the writer's or speaker's experience in using language and the reader's

Sample Summary Lecture

or listener's experience in responding to language.

We also suggest, in doing this, that there is a difference between the experiences of writers and speakers in producing the evocative language, and the experience of readers and listeners in consuming it.

The notion of the objective correlative, then, suggests, as we are defining it, and as I think Eliot intended it, that each poem, play, short story, novel or what have you, is indeed an individual experience for reader and writer, listener and speaker. However, we paraphrase, whatever we read into or out of, the particular work, we never quite succeed in getting exactly the total significance, the individual experience contained in, or produced by, the work. That is, when we try to talk about the experience of the work, unless we are able ourselves to evoke an experience for ourselves and our audience, unless we ourselves succeed as the original writer or speaker did, we cannot quite capture the essence of the thing we are discussing. We can't find an objective correlative. The term objective correlative, then, is a label for the unique message communicated by evocative language. As Thomas Pollock, another critic, says, "The objective correlative acts as a complex evocative symbol and evokes the particular experience which the writer was striving to communicate." "In other words," Pollock continues, "we have here two major phases in the process of evocation; in the first phase, the writer's (or speakers

Sample Summary Lecture

linguistic symbols evoke in the reader's (or listener's) mind the objective correlative, and in the second, the objective correlative evokes the desired experience."

We are not saying here, that the writer or speaker always succeeds in producing exactly the emotion that he intended, or that every reader or listener will respond in exactly the same way. We are saying that what the user of evocative language is aiming at is the creation of an objective correlative such that his audience will have individual experiences which are relevant to the experience he recreates through his use of the resources of language. Finally, I do not mean to imply that each example of evocative language must be viewed as creating only one objective correlative. The writer or speaker may be interested in recreating a variety of experiences which may be brought together in a total experience. Frost's poem "Birches" is a case in point. It seems to me that in this case the poet is trying to tie experiences together, to use many objectives correlatives to share with us a complex experience. It should be obvious by this time that using language in this way is extremely complex. Our need to share experience, however, is so great that we overcome this complexity and succeed in using language to create objective correlatives.

Now let's consider a new example of the way in which objective correlatives are developed. In doing this we can

Sample Summary Continued

put to use as we see the occasion to do so, what we know about the human and symbolic resources of our language. However, we will be concerned here with the total effect, rather than the individual device or resource. We will be looking to find the way in which various resources of language are used to create objective correlatives which evoke individual experiences.

The poem I'm distributing is a poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay. I think it demonstrates clearly the way in which analysis can help us, and the way in which ultimately we respond to the evocation of an objective correlative and the subsequent evocation of an experience. In a word, I think the poem will show us both the limits of analysis and limits of poetry.

Distribute copies of Edna
St. Vincent Millay's "Lament"
from her book Second April
(New York: Harper's, 1921).

In developing the subsequent treatment of Millay's poem the teacher may use either the discussion or the lecture technique, depending on the time available. If a discussion technique is used the teacher could begin the analysis of the poem by asking the students about their conditioned responses to key words in the poem. He would proceed to raise questions about the sound qualities of the poem, the expectancies or sets developed by the poet, the way the poet uses our tendencies to respond to words as we would to their referents, the way the poet uses suggestion and contextual patterning, and the way she develops complex symbols. The discussion would then turn to a consideration of the metaphors, metonymys, synecdoches, ironies, and allusions in the poem. In developing this discussion he would hope to arrive at a series of statements about the poem similar to that which follows. The comments, of course, do not exhaust the possibilities of the poem, but rather are meant to suggest some of the ideas which might result from a close analysis of the poem. If the teacher is not able to spend the time developing such ideas inductively the following discussion might be developed as a lecture suggesting the way in which analysis helps to explore the poem. It is worth noting that the inductive approach will probably help students to understand the relevance of analysis better than the deductive lecture technique. Finally, it should be noted that the poem chosen makes a simple point, simply. The poem was chosen for this reason. Even the least sophisticated of students should respond to the objective correlative developed in the poem. This should help to establish the way in which the objective correlative operates without analysis. The teacher would, therefore, begin by asking for a general discussion of the poem before asking the questions outlined below. In this general discussion try to avoid the terminology developed in the unit.

Introduction

Now let's try analyzing this poem in some detail. We'll be using our knowledge of the human and symbolic resources of language in this analysis. We won't try to discuss thoroughly the way each of the resources is used in the poem. This would take too much time. We will be satisfied to find examples which indicate the way the resources are used. In other words, our analysis won't be as detailed as it could be. It will, however, be sufficient for our purposes. Let's begin with our conditioned responses to words.

Sample Discussion Questions

The teacher may wish to use a ratio such as man is to woman as dead is to _____ in eliciting this response.

1. Thinking back to our original discussion of our conditioned responses to words, and particularly of the way you responded to the word "man," what would you guess would be a likely conditioned response to the word "dead"?

(Alive. We respond often by naming the opposite of the original word.)

2. How does the contrast between the words "dead" and "alive" relate to this poem?

(The poem revolves around the problem of life "going on" in spite of death.)

3. What similar responses might be expected to the words "little" and "old"?

(They might suggest big and young.)

4. How does this relate to the problem of the poem?

(Generally, big, old people die, little young people live. Moreover, life "goes on" through the process of little people becoming big old people. It also relates to the way children refer to themselves and to adults. They are "little," adults are "big" and "old.")

I think you can see that analysis of our conditioned responses to words gives us a clearer sense of how the poem

develops. Noting the sensual characteristics, particularly the sounds of the poet's word will aid us in a similar way. Let's consider, for example, the rhyme which Millay uses to end her poem.

5. With what other word in the poem does the last word, "why" rhyme?

(Die.)

6. What have these two words to do with the poem?

(In a sense they summarize the poem, they ask the main question of the poem--why life, why death.)

Let's consider another of the resources we've discussed. We've talked about the writer or speaker creating expectancies through his use of language.

7. Is there any expectancy developed in this poem?

(Yes. We are led to expect that the poem's whole point will be "Life must go on.")

8. What happens to this expectancy?

(It is thwarted in the last line of the poem, and the whole point of the poem rests on the thwarting.)

We'll want to come back to this matter and talk about it using another term a little later. For the moment, however, let's turn our attention to the way in which the poet uses our tendency to equate words and the things they refer to.

Sample Discussion Questions Continued

9. How would you relate the things the words "breakfast" and "medicine" refer to, to the theme of this poem?

(Breakfasts and medicine are things of the living; the dead don't eat breakfast or take medicine which are things that help life to "go on.")

Now let's consider the way Millay uses suggestions.

I'd like to direct your attention to the lines "Anne shall have the keys/To make a pretty noise with."

10. What pretty noises occur in keys?

(The noises of music.)

11. Is poetry sometimes talked about as though it were the music of words?

(Yes.)

12. Who is making poetic music out of the "keys" of a dead father in this poem?

(Edna St. Vincent Millay.)

Let's talk about controlling the context in which we encounter words and phrases. I think we can illustrate Millay's use of this resource by looking at the refrain, the repeated line in the closing section of the poem.

13. Is your reaction to the first statement that "life must go on" the same as your reaction to its final repetition?

(No.)

14. How is it different?

(We sense a kind of desperation in the statement which is confirmed by the last line of the poem.)

Finally, let's consider the way the writer or speaker can use language to develop a complex symbol, or the way he can count on us to put things together.

15. What is our initial reaction to the speaker of the poem?

(We see the speaker as insensitive, a dealer in clichés)

16. What does the last line of the poem do to our notion of the speaker?

(It makes us re-evaluate, and we see instead that the speaker is desperately trying to find some way of understanding and dealing with the death of her mate.)

17. In what way does this demonstrate the writer's creation of a complex symbol?

(The writer has given us a sense of the character of the speaker, that is, the writer has created a complex symbol, the poem, which recreates an experience through the creation of a character involved in the experience.)

I know we're moving rapidly and skipping over much that could be said, but let's continue by shifting from the human resources of language to the symbolic resources. In this particular poem some of the symbolic resources we've discussed are less obviously used than they have been in other works we discussed. I think we can find them being used, however. Let's begin by talking about metonymy.

18. What do the lines "Keys and pennies/Covered with tobacco;" suggest about the character of the dead father?

(His manliness; tobacco, keys, and coins mix in the pockets of men.)

19. Why might we consider these lines metonymic?

(Because the non-physical quality of manliness is suggested by reference to the physical things associated with the man.)

It is worth noting that while the metonymy used here is less obvious than some of the other examples we've mentioned the tone of the poem demands that it be so. We don't expect, at least at this point in the poem, both clichés and obvious figurative language. The actor, in this scene, the speaker of the poem, does not seem able to use

figures or tropes, although her simple direct language does operate figuratively as in the case we've just discussed. Let's consider another case where the direct language of the poem seems to have a synecdochic dimension.

20. How might we classify the lines:

"From his old coats
I'll make you little jackets;
I'll make you little trousers
From his old pants."

as an example of synecdoche?

(By noting that the "little jackets" and "trousers" are both contained in and parts of the "old coats" and "pants." The little, then, is part of and contained in both the pants and coats and the dead father. From the father the little children are made.)

Now let me return to a point we made earlier, when we discussed expectancies.

21. What did we say the last line of the poem did with our regard to our expectancies?

(It thwarted or contradicted them.)

22. What figure of speech has this quality?

(Irony.)

23. How does classifying this last line as ironic fit with our broader definition of irony?

(The last line of the poem makes our view of the speaker more complicated, increases the complexity of the experience being shared. In a word, it gives us a new perspective which grows out of the other perspectives of the poem, a perspective of perspectives. It forces us to recognize that we might respond in desperation as the woman did.)

Now let me consider the use of allusion in this poem.

24. Where does the phrase "life must go on" come from?

(While the line is not literary, it is one of the typical kinds of comments people make when they are faced with the death of a loved one, or perhaps it is the kind of phrase which one uses in talking to someone who has lost a father or a husband.)

In other words, the allusion here is not to literature, but to one of the conventional ways people use language in the face of death.

25. What does the poet accomplish by using this allusion?

(Millay accomplishes two things. First, she suggests the way that the woman desperately tries to find some way to explain what must be done to the children, and second, she suggests the kind of hollow words which others have spoken to the woman. The last line of the poem reinforces these ideas.)

You may have noticed that thus far we have avoided trying to talk about the use of metaphor in this poem. My reason for doing so is simple. I think that by noting the way that the entire poem operates as a metaphor we can summarize the poem quite neatly.

26. What is being explained in terms of what in this poem?

(A woman's anguish at the death of her husband is being explained or demonstrated in terms of her attempt to explain to her children that "life must go on.")

Summary

I think the point of all of this is pretty clear. We've now neatly summarized our poem. We've also explored some of the ways the poet has used the resources of language to accomplish her purpose. We could go a good deal further with this. We could talk, for example, about the irony of Miss Millay's making "pretty" poetic "noises" out of the "keys" of a dead father, or shape and sound qualities in the last section of the poem, or the conversational tone which the poem develops and which

Summary Continued

ironically contrasts with the muteness in the face of death that is suggested by the last line. We might even talk about why the last line must be last.

However, all of our analysis is after the fact, isn't it? You understood the poem, you shared the experience before we started analyzing, before we "neatly" summarized. Our analysis may have suggested a few things that made your understanding richer, that enabled you to share the experience in question in new ways. Moreover, our analysis is justified, to an extent, by the fact that writers choose their words carefully and they expect us to read them carefully. Analysis is just a way of reading carefully But the poem doesn't depend on analysis and we can sometimes read too much into and out of a poem. We may have done so in this case, or with some of the other poems and stories we've discussed. Sometimes in illustrating the methods of analysis, or in using analysis, teachers and students get carried away with the game they are playing. The notion of the objective correlative is an antidote to over-indulgence in analyzing. It calls our attention to the fact that the poem is a synthesis, is more than the sum of its parts. The objective correlative of Millay's "Lament" is that which was evoked in you when you read the poem and that which, subsequently, evoked in you the experience that you had reading the poem.

Assignment

Concluding Exercise:

The purpose of this concluding exercise is to give students an opportunity to use for themselves some of the vocabulary and concepts developed in the course of this unit. It will serve as a replacement for the usual final examinations. The basic assignment will involve each student's writing a four or five page paper with the aid of study questions. The study questions which follow this note are examples of the type of questions which the teacher might use. Once this phase of the assignment is completed the teacher would use either of the following procedures. He might organize students into groups (the groups could be composed of those who answered the questions in each of the four areas indicated in the study guide) and have these groups report to the class. If this procedure seems too time-consuming, the teacher could pick some of the most insightful papers from each of the areas and have them duplicated for the class. A class discussion could then be developed around these papers. During this discussion the teacher could ask students for comments based on their own papers, as well as those which have been duplicated. The teacher would try, in this discussion to stress the limits as well as values of analysis. (See the preceding discussion of Millay's "Lament.") Finally, it should be said that the teacher may wish to use a novel other than Golding's Lord of the Flies in this exercise. He may, in fact, wish to use a poem, a play, or a short story, rather than a novel. The study questions could be adopted for use with whatever the teacher chooses. Lord of the Flies, however, has several virtues which make it an excellent choice for such work. The most important of these are: it is a novel which has sufficient punch for high school students, that is, the objective correlative should evoke an experience in most high school students; Golding is a conscious artist and his work in this novel is both intricate and thoroughly developed, and, therefore, the novel lends itself to a careful analysis on many levels; the book is read by students in this age group and students interest should be excellent.

*Study Questions on The Use of Evocative Language in
William Golding's Lord of the Flies.

AREA 1 - The Human Resources of Language

The sample questions in this area tend to be specific questions. The teacher would either need to develop additional specific questions or make the questions more general if he wanted to have students write papers specifically treating the use of each of the human resources of language. If a general treatment of the way Golding relies on all of these devices is desired, these questions should suffice. If the latter is the case, the teacher should direct students to write on the general topic of Golding's use of the human resources of language and tell them that the study questions are meant to suggest the kind of questions they should concern themselves with in the paper.

1. How does our conditioned response to the words "crunched" and "screamed" in the sentences "The sticks fell and the mouth of the new circle crunched and screamed," contribute to the development of Golding's point in his description of Simon's death? (p. 141)
2. How do the sound qualities of the hunter's chant (Kill the Pig! Cut his throat! Spill his blood!) relate to the theme of Golding's novel, and why does Golding italicize the words of the chant?
3. What expectancies does Golding create by having Simon tell Ralph that he'll "get back all right"? (p. 103)
4. How does the way the boys respond to the word "beast" relate to the notion of our responding to words as we would to the referents of the words?
5. What does Golding gain, in terms of suggestion, by making Simon inarticulate about the "beast" (p. 82) and by not specifying what it is that Simon recognizes when he confronts the Lord of the Flies? (p. 128)
6. In what way does our response to what Jack's Hunters have planned for Ralph when they catch him depend on the context in which we have encountered sticks "sharpened at both ends"? (p. 175)
7. By the time the dead pilot who becomes the "beast from the air" leaves the scene of action, the island, Golding has developed a complex symbol around this corpse. What are some of the meanings that the corpse comes to have to the various characters in the novel, and what do you think Golding intended by introducing this complex symbol?
(pp. 88, 89, 91, 113, 114, 135, 141)

AREA II - Symbolic Resources of Language

These study questions are much broader than those in Area I. Students would write on the individual questions. If the teacher prefers specific questions might be developed and students could write on the use of symbolic resources in general.

1. Mr. Golding has said that his novel is meant to demonstrate "that the shape of a society must depend on the ethical nature of the individual and not on any political system however apparently logical or respectable." If we consider the novel as a metaphor trying to demonstrate this notion in terms of the actions of the boys on the island, what might we say about the metaphoric significance of the personalities of the boys who are the central characters of the novel, Ralph, Jack, Piggy, and Simon?
2. We have said that metonymy is the attempt to talk about the physical in terms of the non-physical. If we considered Golding's novel as a metonymy in which he attempts to explain the nature of man through describing the physical events on the island, what could we conclude about Golding's view of the nature of man?
3. In what way does considering the conditions of life on the island as a synecdochic representation of life in general extend the meanings of Lord of the Flies?
4. How do these words of the naval officer who rescues the boys, "Fun and games,"..."What have you been doing? Having a war or something?" call to our attention a new total perspective, produce an ironic view, for or of Golding's novel?

AREA III - Motive Analysis

In this section both specific and general questions are listed.

1. What does Golding accomplish by making a tropical island where food is abundant the scene in which the actors of his novel act?
2. What does Golding accomplish by putting Simon in his secret forest hiding place while he witnesses the sow's death and the creation of the "Lord of the Flies"? (p. 50 and pp. 127, 128)
3. What are the effects of the acts which the boys perform on the scene in which the acts are performed?
4. Why are the acts that result in Simon's death a natural result of the scene into which Simon stumbles (pp. 139-141).
5. What is the original agency of government which the boys use to deal with the scene in which they find themselves and what does the scene do to that agency?
6. How and why does the conch operate as an agency during the early part of the novel?

From: Totem and Taboo

Sigmund Freud

Let us call up the spectacle of a totem meal of the kind we have been discussing, amplified by a few probably features which we have not yet been able to consider. The clan is celebrating the ceremonial occasion by the cruel slaughter of its totem animal and is devouring it raw--blood, flesh, and bones. The clansman are there, dressed in the likeness of the totem and imitating it in sound and movement, as though they are seeking to stress their identity with it. Each man is conscious that he is performing an act forbidden to the individual and justifiable only through the participation of the whole clan; nor may anyone absent from the killing and the meal. When the deed is done, the slaughtered animal is lamented and bewailed. The mourning is obligatory, imposed by dread of a threatened retribution. As Robertson Smith (1894, 412) remarks of an analogous occasion, its chief purpose is to disclaim responsibility for the killing.

From: Strachey, J., trans. The Standard Edition of The Complete Psychological Works, Vol. XII, Totem and Taboo. London: Hogarth, 1955.

7. When the actors, the group of boys, paint their faces (change themselves in response to the scene) what happens to their acts?
8. What qualities in Simon make his responses to the scene and changes in scene so different from those of the other actors?
9. What is the author's purpose in removing the boys from the scene at the very moment when its final effects would be accomplished?
10. What is Simon's purpose in suggesting that the beast might be in the boys themselves and why does he fail to accomplish his purpose? (p. 82)

AREA IV - Ritual

Students answering this question will have to read Excerpt #11.

1. How do these passages from Freud's Totem and Taboo relate to Golding's Lord of the Flies?
2. What is the ritual significance of face painting, chanting, and dancing as they occur in this novel?
3. If we remember that frequently in traditional religious accounts of events, the prophet goes to the mountain to discover truth and returns to tell his people of the truth, that frequently his people kill the prophet, that in the Judaeo-Christian tradition the prophet who is talking about a dead man on the hill is an important figure, that Golding has suggested that Simon might be Simon called Peter, what ritual significance can we see in Simon's role in the novel?
4. In ancient rituals the sea is often worshipped as being related to the basic rhythms of life and death. Some peoples, for example, believe deaths occur at low tide, births at high tide. Given these notions, what significance can we see in the fact that all of the dead of Golding's island, with the exception of the boy lost in the first fire, are eventually carried away by the sea?

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APPENDIX B

Figurative Language

Allegory - is an extension of metaphoric figures of speech. The agents and sometimes the setting represent general concepts, moral qualities or other abstractions.

In Pilgrim's Progress Bunyan allegorizes the doctrine of Christian salvation. A great variety of literary forms have been used for allegory. Spenser's Faerie Queen is an allegorical romance, Pilgrim's Progress an allegorical prose narrative, and William Collins' Ode on the Poetical Character, an allegorical lyric poem. Longer allegories include Gulliver's Travels and Moby Dick.

Aesop's animal fables might be generally classed as allegorical but more specifically are fables. A FABLE is a story exemplifying a moral thesis, in which animals talk and act like human beings. Other examples of the fable include Animal Farm by George Orwell, The Nun's Priest's Tale by G. Chaucer.

A PARABLE is also important in this area of figures and might be generally classed as allegorical but it is unlike the allegory by the actions of abstract personifications, and the fable by not employing animals as agents of the moral or doctrine taught. Instead, a parable is a short narrative, presented so as to bring out the parallel between its elements and a lesson that the speaker is trying to bring home to us.

The parable was one of Christ's favorite literary devices. An example is found in Matthew 7: 16-20.

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thornes, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them.

Irony - is found in both speaking "rhetorical or verbal irony" and writing. One is usually able to detect rhetorical irony much easier than written irony since the speaker can and usually does use facial expressions and vocal intonations. Written irony is sometimes subtle and difficult. This is why the use of irony by a writer carries an implicit compliment to the intelligence of the reader, who is associated with the knowing minority not taken in by the literal meaning. This is also why many ironists are misinterpreted and sometimes (like DeFoe and Swift) get into serious trouble with the obtuse authorities. Examples of irony are found in Swift's Gulliver's Travels and The Modest Proposal and Aldous Huxley's Antic Hay.

Analogy - a complex simile in which the identity is one of principle. The figurative analogy involves a comparison that is novel and unexpected; the effectiveness of such a comparison is enhanced if the objects compared are strikingly unlike in all points except in the point made by the comparison. Woodrow Wilson, for instance, once declared that the sideshows (college activities) were crowding out the main tent (education). In discussing the idea that education should prepare for life, Thomas Huxley said:

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"Suppose it were perfectly certain that the life and fortune of every one of us would, one day or other, depend upon his winning or losing a game of chess. Don't you think we should all consider it a primary duty to learn at least the names and moves of the pieces; to have a notion of a gambit, and keen eye for all the means of giving or getting out of a check?"

-Quoted in James A. Winans' Speech-Making, p. 167.

Antithesis - the contrasting of two things, pointing out their differences.

Example:

"Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom; and a great empire and little minds go ill together."

- Edmund Burke, Speech on Conciliation with America, March 22, 1775.

Apostrophe - the addressing of a personified abstraction or an absent person.

Example:

"O brilliant and incomparable Grady! We lay for a season thy precious dust beneath the soil that bore and cherished thee, but we fling back against our brightening skies the thoughtless speech that calls thee dead."

-John Temple Graves, Speech at the Funeral of Henry W. Grady, December 26, 18--

Epigram- a short, pungent statement.

Examples:

"Kings will be tyrants from policy, when subjects are rebels from principle."

-Edmund Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France.

"Speak softly and carry a big stick."

-Theodore Roosevelt, Minnesota State Fair, Sept. 2, 1901

Euphemism - is the third type of language device involved in persuasion. Euphemisms are employed because they are more socially acceptable than their synonyms. A euphemism is, in fact, a circumlocution, a roundabout way of expressing an idea.

Examples:

"to pass away" or "to go to one's last reward" instead of "to die"

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"morticians" for "undertakers"
 "Salisbury steak" for "hamburger"
 "stomach" for "belly"

Hyperbole - intentional exaggeration to make a point. Hyperbole is the natural language of emotion. Gross exaggerations breed misunderstandings. Hyperbole may, however, be effective in humorous writings.

Personification - which endows familiar subjects with human characteristics.

Examples"

"He (Alexander Hamilton) touched the dead corpse of the Public Credit, and it sprung to its feet."

-Daniel Webster, Speech at a Public Dinner at
 New York, March 10, 1831.

"The march of the human mind is slow."

-Edmund Burke, Speech on American Taxation, 1774.

"The coquetry of public opinion, which has her caprices, and must have her way."

-Edmund Burke, Letter to Thomas Burgh, New Year's
 Day, 1780.

"We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth and listen to the song of that siren (hope) till she transforms us into beasts."

-Patrick Henry, Speech in the Virginia Convention,
 March 23, 1775.

Simile - the comparison of two things not in the same class including one of several words such as like or as.

Examples:

"Prejudice is like a window with all the curtains drawn."

-Anonymous

"Individuals pass like shadows; but the commonwealth is fixed and stable."

-Edmund Burke, Speech on the Economic Reform, 1780.

Understatement - the opposite of hyperbole. The effect is almost always to magnify the matter discussed by implying that the means of expression is inadequate to the task. It is usually ironic. The conclusion drawn is so conservative that it is in striking contrast to the expected conclusion.

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Example:

Wendell Phillips employed understatement in his 1861 oration on Toussaint L'Ouverture, Negro liberator of the negroes of Santo Domingo:

"Let us pause a moment and find something to measure him by. You remember Macaulay says, comparing Cromwell with Napoleon, that Cromwell showed the greater military genius, if we consider that he never saw an army till he was forty; while Napoleon was educated from a boy in the best military schools in Europe. Cromwell manufactured his own army; Napoleon at the age of twenty was placed at the head of the best troops Europe ever saw. They were both successful; but, says Macaulay, with such disadvantages the Englishman showed the greater genius. Whether you allow the inference or not, you will at least grant that it is a fair mode of measurement. Apply it to Toussaint. Cromwell never saw an army until he was forty; this man never saw a soldier till he was fifty. Cromwell manufactured his own army--out of what? Englishmen--the best blood in Europe. Out of the middle class of Englishmen--the best blood of the island. And with it he conquered what? Englishmen--their equals. This man manufactured his army out of what? Out of what you call the despicable races of negroes, debased, demoralized by two hundred years of slavery, one hundred thousand of them imported into the island within four years, unable to speak a dialect intelligible even to each other. Yet out of this mixed and, as you say, despicable mass, he forged a thunderbolt, and hurled it at what? At the proudest blood in Europe, the Spaniard, and sent him home conquered; at the most warlike blood in Europe, the French, and put them under his feet; at the pluckiest blood in Europe, the English, and they sulked home to Jamaica. Now if Cromwell was a general, at least this man was a soldier."

-From Speeches, Lectures and Letters, First Series,
Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co.

APPENDIX C

Types of Irony

UNDERSTATEMENT (Meiosis) is the kind of irony which derives from deliberately representing something as much less than it really is. Swift wrote "Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her appearance for the worse." The comic effect of Twain's comment "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated" is founded on meiosis.

DRAMATIC IRONY (tragic irony) is applied to the words and actions of characters in a play who confidently expect the opposite of what fate holds in store, or who say something that anticipates the tragic outcome, but in a sense very different from the one they intended. The Greek dramatists, especially Sophocles, who based their plots on legends whose outcome was already known to their audience, made frequent use of this device.

COSMIC IRONY (irony of fate) is attributed to literary works in which God or Destiny is represented to be manipulating events as though deliberately to frustrate and mock the protagonist. This is a favorite structural device of Thomas Hardy as is found in Tess of the D'Urbervilles.

ROMANTIC IRONY is a term used by German writers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century to designate a mode of dramatic or narrative writing in which the author builds up and then deliberately breaks down the illusion, by revealing himself to be the wilful creator and manipulator of his characters and their actions. Byron's poem, Don Juan, employs this device for comic or satiric effect.